

BY-WAYS OF BELIEF

By
Conrad Noel.



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BYWAYS OF BELIEF

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BY

CONRAD NOEL

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ORIGINALITY AND THE CATHOLIC FAITH

Creedless creed-builders—Extracts and essences—The return to dogma—
—The nature of heresy—Conventionality versus orthodoxy—
Modernism and traditionalism—The composite Catholic man—A
good spiritual digestion—What is originality?—The sheep and the
goats.

ORIGINALITY AND THE CATHOLIC FAITH

THE dominant protest of our times is a protest against creeds. People who believe anything definitely and can put their belief into words, are now called Creedalists. People who see the value of belonging to a fellowship are called Institutionalists. Christianity is supposed to have nothing in common with creeds or institutions, and we hear much of the essence of belief—as though the Christian Religion were a kind of meat extract, a Harnack's Bovril or a Schmiedel's Oxo. But the wiser doctors of the body will tell you that these extracts and essences are much over-rated, and the wiser doctors of the soul are coming to the same conclusion. Opponents of the Harnack's extract of belief theory may well ask if we should judge of the essential oak by the acorn, rather than by the tree, and insist that the Christian Faith is to be sought not only in the Gospel promise, but also in its historical development. They further insist—and in view of modern New Testament criticism this is significant—that even if acorn analysis were the true method, Christians, in point of fact, have no acorn to analyse, for the Gospels, however near they may

be to the source of the Christian Religion, can on no possible showing be identified with that source; in other words, we can only know the historical Jesus through the memories of two of His disciples as recorded by two of their disciples—this is the conservative view; or, according to the liberal view, only through the memory of men who knew the first disciples, or of a still later generation. M. Loisy sums up this position in these pregnant words: "We know Christ only by the tradition, across the tradition, and in the tradition of the Primitive Christians."

It is astounding that theosophists, rationalists, spiritualists, and other modern heterodoxists, every one of them evolutionists in the popular sense, should be continually harking back to what they consider the Gospel seed, and pouring contempt upon its historical growth in institution and creed. And it is a curious commentary on the persistent human instinct for dogma that the people who begin by denying the value of creeds, themselves become the most fantastic of creed-builders. Attempts have recently been made to distinguish between doctrines and dogmas, and there has arisen a more moderate school among the unorthodox who recognise the need of doctrine, but object to what they call its dogmatic teaching. The most interesting exponent of this distinction is Mr Lloyd Thomas, who contends that dogma is a doctrine *of which the Church has made a law*. "It is the element of official and external imposition that carries doctrine over into dogma. The very word signifies a command . . . it implies, then, an external official authority claiming a compel-

ling obedience. . . . It is the element of compulsion overriding the reason and conscience of man, and suppressing the right and duty of individual judgment, that degrades a Church from a voluntary fellowship of the spirit into a legislative and judicial authority." Mr Lloyd Thomas illustrates this by reference to the doctrine of evolution, which is "universally accepted by scientific men, but is not a dogma. Any man is at liberty to test and verify the facts afresh; various interpretations may be put upon them, so that Darwin and Wallace, Spencer and Weismann, do not speak exactly the same thing. Now suppose that, in order to put an end to all discussion and difference, the British Association passed a resolution: 'Such and such is the doctrine of evolution which, if any member do not believe, he shall be and is hereby excommunicated from our fellowship.' Here is introduced the element of artificial authority and external compulsion; what was a scientific doctrine has now become a scientific dogma." He holds that it was necessary for the Church to define doctrines, but that when the Councils converted these into dogmas by laying them down authoritatively and excommunicating or persecuting those who could not or would not believe them, they were putting insufferable limitations on the search for truth.

It is doubtful, in point of fact, if this distinction between doctrine and dogma is valid, but the question is comparatively unimportant so long as we understand the sense in which writers of this school use their terms. Admitting, then, that dogma means not only a body of truth collectively agreed upon, but

such truth authoritatively promulgated, does not the denial of dogma involve denial of the Church? And this is precisely the point at which such thinkers arrive.

If the search for truth be the supreme object of the Christian Religion, there is, of course, no inaccuracy in Mr Lloyd Thomas's analogy with the doctrine of evolution and the British Association. But Catholics would altogether deny that the Church was built as a Society for spiritual research. It was surely built to promulgate truth and to band men together as comrades in arms. Similes are dangerous things, but the metaphor of an army is much more fitting to the idea of the Church than the metaphor of a hunting party in doubt as to the quarry it hunts. It is not a common search but a common find that unites us. This is not to be taken as meaning that the Catholics of any particular age are to pride themselves on the possession of the whole truth, but the very object of their being banded together is that they may teach and live that truth which they do possess, and that, by living it, truth may be added to them in greater measure. The search for truth has been denied by Church officialdom, and its advocates have exalted it out of due proportion into the first essential of a Christian Church.

Now, if there be a body of truths by which men may live, and if it be all-important that men should band themselves together for the theoretic and practical expression of these truths, it surely follows that such a fellowship must speak with authority, must have some rule or discipline, must at least exercise the

right of exclusion. An invisible Church is a contradiction in terms. It is all very well to talk of men of goodwill all over the earth united in the bonds of sympathy, and of such a unity as forming the Catholic Church. But the weakness of this position lies in the fact that ultimately it is a denial of the central doctrines of the Christian Faith—namely, of the Incarnation, of the resurrection of the body, of the union between the spiritual and the tangible and material; such sympathetic bonds are vague and meaningless, until the people so bound are prepared to unite in a visible organisation for the corporate practice of their spiritual theory in a world of affairs. And immediately this is remembered, we realise the necessity for a common creed, common liturgy, organisation, and the right of expulsion. Strictly speaking, the school of thought represented in England by Mr Thomas is not modernist, for technically the modernist is one who believes in a visible Church Catholic as a normal means of man's redemption, but who recognises need of reformation in that Church and the value of mental alertness and sincerity. The term itself is foolish, and was only invented by the enemies of the movement, but the school it nicknames is fairly distinct and definite in outlook and proposal. Mr Gilbert Chesterton has perhaps somewhat confused the issue by including men like Nietzsche as modernists, but the modernist is one who accepts the Christian tradition while behaving towards his Church precisely as Mr Chesterton would have a true patriot behave towards his country. The Ultramontane might with accuracy be called the theological Jingo.

Immediately we unite together on the basis of a common faith for common action, we inevitably become exclusive. Affirmation implies exclusion. You cannot affirm that there is a God without excluding the notion that there is no God. You cannot lay down that it is wrong to torture men without excluding the notion that it is at the same time right. And if certain men have banded themselves together on the basis that God is the Father of men, that God is good, that men should behave as brothers one to another, such a fellowship would be obliged to reserve to itself the right of expulsion should they discover that one of their members was promulgating in their name that the ultimate power behind the world is evil, and that human sacrifices are acceptable to it. Toleration is good, but toleration is not God. There are circumstances in which toleration is the cruelty of devils.

The protest against Catholic narrowness and exclusiveness would, I think, be legitimately met if we remembered that Catholic theologians have always suggested that the Church has a body and a spirit, and that there are many who are baptized into its body who become alien to its spirit, and many who belong to the spirit of the Church who for one reason or another have not been baptized into its body. But this is a very different position from that which denies the value of the visible fellowship.

It is, on the other hand, essential to remember that the Catholic Faith by no means altogether consists in our convictions about God, but also in God's convictions about us. Christian truth has its roots,

not in human opinion but in human nature. It is the unveiling of certain facts which are fundamental to life and of God as the foundation of life. This indeed is the justification of infant baptism in which a child, regardless of the opinions it will afterwards form, is snatched away from the ape and tiger sub-human kingdom, the kingdom "red in tooth and claw," and transplanted into a fellowship of grace; not because it rightfully belongs to the kingdom of the lower nature, but because of right it belongs to the kingdom of true human nature which is the image of the Divine. It might therefore be argued with considerable show of reason that, however perverted might become the christened man's ideas, his excommunication would be wrong, because false opinions cannot alter the fact of his divine nature. Now, he might grow up, as did an early heretic, to teach men that human nature is essentially vile and ungodlike. A General Council anathematised this teaching and excommunicated its author. But people who argue like this do not quite understand the meaning of excommunication. The Church is a body organised with the object of declaring to men their essential nature, their relationship to God and to each other, and its members are pledged to give practical effect to these truths in their individual and corporate life. This visible society is obliged, therefore, to exercise the right of exclusion if it is not hopelessly to stultify its message and paralyse its action; but excommunication does not involve absolute and final expulsion, but temporary exclusion from the life of the actual visible fellowship. The importance of this distinction will be appreciated

when we remember that the Catholic Church, in reconciling the excluded member, is not allowed (by its own fundamental Faith) to re-baptize.

The protest against dogma and authority is, of course, by no means all to the bad. It is to some extent the outcome of a healthy dissatisfaction with false authority and false doctrine. The dogmas of the modern Church do not always ring true, and the people mistrust the seat of authority whether it be placed at Rome or at Canterbury. One of the most brilliant defenders of modern Catholicism, Mr Gilbert Chesterton, seems to be in some confusion in this matter. He is able to show us, as indeed all true defenders of the Catholic faith in every age have shown us, that Catholic doctrine is grounded in the permanent needs of human nature, and that human nature responds to it and discovers itself in and through the traditional faith. But he sometimes seems inclined to identify this authority with Rome—not, indeed, with the Roman Catholic democracies throughout the world, but with the decisions of modern Popes. Now these decisions do not find any response in the hearts and minds of the peoples of England or Italy, of France or America. It is all very well to say that the democracy in Catholic countries has worshipped Our Lady for many centuries, and that therefore the dogma of The Immaculate Conception¹ is the outcome of the democratic worship. If this is so, it altogether destroys the contention of the modern Popes that the Church

¹ One has only to compare the preamble to this doctrine promulgated at Rome with the arguments that led up to decisions of the early and democratic councils of the Church, to discover that Rome, in becoming autocratic, has become intellectually barren.

is derived from them and not they from the Church. The present Pope is not departing from Tridentine doctrine but is perfecting it when he repeats the apostolic ruling of Pius VI.,¹ who pronounced that it was heretical to hold that the power of ecclesiastical government is derived from the body of the faithful, and branded as heresy that the Pope received from the Church his power of administration. In the Anglican Church many High Churchmen hold that the power of the priest and the power of the Council are derived directly from a far-off Heaven. Vaticanism goes a step further. It holds that the power of the Pope, sole emperor of the world, is given direct and through no mediumship of men from the sole Emperor of the Skies. Many modernists hold (I use the term in its technical sense) that the Catholic Faith is a revelation by God of the essential facts of human life, that the Church corresponds with those facts, that the peoples of the earth were blindly struggling towards those facts when God met them half-way. The prodigal son was trying to find a way back home, and the Father met him when he was yet a long way off. They hold, further, that the international baptized democracy is a royal priesthood, that for the sake of Holy Order or Holy Orders, bishops, priests, and deacons are appointed from the whole priestly body for different functions and administrations in the same, and that the official priesthood is the mouthpiece of the priestly democracy. This has not been the dominant view throughout Christian history, and yet it can claim an unbroken tradition in all places and times.

¹ Apostolic Constitution, "Auctorem Fidei."

This doctrine has been expressly and repeatedly condemned by the modern Popes. Roman Catholics may say the condemnations have not been *ex cathedra*, but if they take this ground they abandon the one solid argument in favour of a Living Voice—namely, the necessity for Authoritarian certainty in the world at all times. That argument sent Newman, and has sent thousands, over to Rome. Now, the Popes absolutely believed themselves to be speaking *ex cathedra* when promulgating these condemnations; an enormous majority of Roman Catholics also believe it. But if it is to be left to private judgment as to whether the Living Voice solemnly giving its rulings is the Living Voice or not, according to whether one happens to agree with its decisions or not, the argument that lost us Newman is admitted by Roman Catholics to be absolutely worthless.

On the other hand, if these decisions be infallible decisions of the supreme ruler of the Church, then we can only say that they have finally ruled out of existence the Church of which he is supposed to be ruler. They have degraded and destroyed the Catholic idea, and have made of religion an unnatural monstrosity that no one could test and no one would have any inclination towards until it was superimposed upon men by this alien emperor. It is this perversion of the idea of authority, forced to its logical conclusion in Rome and held illogically by High Anglicans, which has goaded good men into a denial of the visible Church and its natural discipline. It is ridiculous for us to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds, to defend the democratic decision of de-

mocratically chosen Catholic Councils, and at the same time to defend the Papalist autocracy which has certainly repudiated the rights of the democracy in things theological and bids fair to crush democracy in the sphere of politics and social economics. Rome is a pleasant anæsthetic for the rich, but can no longer be claimed as a refuge for the poor.

It is therefore the stupidity and inhumanity of modern dogma which accounts in part for the modern revolt. By this I do not mean in the least to say that wisdom went out of the Church in the fourth century, or that the Holy Spirit departed at the end of the sixth. Nevertheless, the break up of Christendom has naturally injured the fractured parts, and it is less likely that a development of truth should be forthcoming in what Mark Twain has described as a subdivided in place of an undivided Church—less likely, but not impossible. But if such development should so come, it will not be from the absolutist throne but from the democracy.

It is not only this addition of alien and barren dogmas which is to be noticed, but also the unintelligent repetition of ancient dogmas which once lived and meant life, on the part of people who have ceased to live and mean nothing. That these Catholic doctrines are capable of rejuvenation, I am convinced ; but, as preached at present, they lay no hold upon the imaginations of men and merely serve to aggravate the revolt against dogma. We shall never be rid of all the modern nonsense about undenominationalism and creedless Christianity until we have taken the trouble to understand our creed and live by it. Neither

Protestantism nor Papalism nor Puseyism have been able to put flesh and blood to the bone structure of traditional belief, and it is all very well for us to be contemptuous of the somewhat confused and dispiriting dogmatic substitutes which the "byways of belief" I am here examining have to offer us. They contain, in a meagre and unbalanced condition, much that is of the true proportion of the Catholic faith, a proportion which we disproportioned Christians have so often abandoned. I have perhaps laid myself open to the charge of putting stress upon their errors rather than upon the truths they teach. This is not because I do not recognise their elements of truth, but because their errors are peculiar to them, while the truths they each of them contain are common to them and to the Christian tradition. The truth in Christian Science about the spirit of man is essential to the Christian proportion of faith. The truth about the body of man stressed by materialism is part and parcel of the like faith. The importance of the mind of man urged by rationalism is also within the proportion of the Faith. But it is just because the orthodox have failed to be orthodox and have lapsed into conventionality, that they have lost the proportion and driven eager men into disproportioned heresies. We have lacked the impulsiveness and originality of our Catholic forefathers. They believed. We monotone their beliefs.

But the worst of the theological revolutionists is that they have never taken the trouble to study the Catholic Faith. Someone, sick of the religion of his childhood, starts a new creed, and says: "How much

better my creed is than the Christian Religion taught me by the vicar's wife, or the Sunday School neophyte, or the Rev. Septimus Ebenezer at Salem Chapel." You ask him what that religion was, and he pours out a series of appalling heresies by the side of which his own poor little pet heresy would almost seem orthodox. Then he is angry with you and accuses you of twisting things, and asks: "If the teachers of my youth did not teach me the true faith, what on earth is true faith?" And it is not only the revolutionists, but the conventionalists, who know nothing of their own religion. In England we study every conceivable religion but our own. We run to lectures by a Buddhist monk or a theosophic adept. We read books written in America by woolly-minded chewers of the Higher Thought. We find the latest Persian Prophet "so interestin'." But what proportion of the wary revolutionists, or of the sleepy faithful, has ever mastered its own theologians, either ancient or modern? Mr Fielding Hall knows all about the soul of a foreign people, but little about the soul of England, and nothing about the tradition of the Christian Church. His criticism of the Christian Religion is about as valuable as would be my criticism of Chinese music. What do these people who repudiate the Catholic faith for the creed of some foreign heresiarch know of the writings of Rashdall or Aubrey Moore, Burkitt, A. V. Allen, James Hinton, Frederick Denison Maurice, Westcott, Loisy, Newman, Illingworth, to mention a few names of very diverse and individual modern Christian theologians? What do they know of the mediæval Christian mystics, of Eckhart, or Tauler, and

the rest? Why should they not take Mrs Besant's advice to the young Hindoo who was going to be baptized a Christian? She advised him to study his own religion first. Why should she, and all of them, not have studied their own religion first?

I have spoken of the necessity for a living interpretation of the creeds. Is it too much to hope that this wise movement with the stupid name, Catholic Modernism, may give us such an interpretation? Has not modern physical science changed our notions of the outward facts of the ascension and of the descent into hell? Have we not ourselves abandoned some of the cruder views of Purgatory once current among us? Could not the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity be shown to be not a lifeless and remote riddle, but a profound explanation of the composite nature of man and his universe?

There is beneath every clause of the creed an eternal value. Whether Christ did or did not visit some mine in the bowels of the earth, does not matter. That the power of His redeeming personality broke and breaks all prison bars, and descends to the lowest depths of death and indifference in which men could find themselves in all worlds, matters everything. Whether Christ was levitated so that the disciples could see the soles of His sandals, does not much matter; but that He triumphed over death, and ascended into the innermost heart and life of God that He might fill all things and be the inspiration of all men, matters everything. The exact nature of the flame which burns men in Purgatory matters not; but the fact that as a man sows so shall he reap, and

that this is the justice not of a vindictive demon but of a Mighty Love, matters everything. All these things are essentials of the Catholic tradition. Men and women should be nourished with this food from babyhood. The Catholic Church in each generation should, by the Spirit of God, be able to distinguish and appropriate the essentials of the past, and to abandon the rubbish, until tradition becomes in her children as unconscious as a good digestion. Creeds, as George Meredith has told us, have too often been used as strait-jackets for humanity. Dogmas should be believed and inwardly digested so that they vitalise the whole personality which is now able to forget them because they are part of itself and go forward nourished by this living food. The old faith rightly used is a springboard from which must be made the leap into the future.

This is what constitutes originality in the individual Catholic and in the Catholic Church. Tradition has been woven into the texture of his mind, but, instead of merely repeating tradition, he has grasped its meaning and it gives him his chance. Originality does not consist in abandoning the past or cutting oneself adrift from one's fellows. The alert mind seizes upon the values of the past, and is alive to the present and a master-builder of the future.

What is true of the individual is true of the Church, which is like the mustard seed that became a mighty tree. Trees are nourished, not only through the root but through their thousand leaves which feed upon the nutriment of the air. The Christian religion has spread its branches over many countries and has

drawn its nourishment through its leaves. It has borrowed from Plato, whom St Augustine claimed as a Christian Worthy, and later from Aristotle, whose thought was interwoven by the schoolmen into the Christian pattern. Greece and Rome and Arabia have been laid under contribution for the building of the Kingdom of God. It is almost a truism to say that the Christian Faith is, in some ways, a synthesis of other religions, and that the Church brings out of her treasury things new and old. It is wearying, therefore, to be told that we have borrowed our ceremonial from the Pagan or the Jew, or that it was only when our religion was transplanted from the meagre soil of Palestine into the generous soil of the Roman Empire, that it began to flourish. These are the very things of which we are proud ; for we believe in the Holy Spirit in whom all live and move and have their being, and from whom all good things do come. This is true, and yet it is not the whole truth ; for we perceive in the Catholic Faith a distinct revelation of the Holy Spirit, or rather, perhaps, a focussing of that Spirit in the Brotherhood which Christ founded and which is able boldly to borrow its nourishment from the most divers soils and atmospheres, because of this distinctive spirit within itself. The life within calls to the life without, and is able to rejuvenate itself by the demands it makes upon the world around it. The claim of originality is not always appreciated at its proper value. Someone triumphantly proves that a thought occurring in the mind of Jesus Christ is found in some Pagan sage or Jewish philosopher. Christ was therefore not original.

But the mark of originality is not to think, say, or do something entirely new and alien, but to have the power of distilling a food from a poison; of taking in from the world around one all that is vital, and of rejecting the rest as refuse; and finally, of giving out to the world what has been made in one's inner self a fulgent conviction, in such a way that when one preaches one's gospel, people will say "never man spake as this man." This is the originality we claim for genius. We are perfectly aware that Shakespeare borrowed some of his thoughts and all of his stories from other dramatists, but somehow or other in the process he breathed into them the breath of life. The same is true of Handel, of Beethoven, and of other original composers. So you may parallel this or that thought or saying of the Christ from this or that philosopher; but, somehow or other, Christ breathed into them the breath of life and the Christian Faith struck upon the consciences of the world as a vast outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Not until Christians begin to appreciate their marvellous heritage, and the life-giving proportion of their own religion, will the rush into various modern heresies be stayed. Till then these Byways of Belief remain as thorns in our side, and, after all, in God's sight a living heretic is better than a dead Christian. Puseyism and Papalism have been too sectarian. They have partly devised or kept alive the Catholic idea, but they have not preached the Catholic Faith in its proportion and fullness. But just in the measure that the democracy becomes really Catholic will the Catholic Truth which lurks behind its partial expres-

sion by the various Christian bodies clear the issues. For the full and living truth, preached in the lives and words of men and women who absolutely believe it to the point of death, convinces and saves the world by judgment. It separates the sheep from the goats. The tame and lifeless thing men now call Christianity leads not only bad men, but good men, to revolt. The Catholic Faith preached in all its reasonableness will draw all men unto it, or at least all men of goodwill. Nowadays the Faith is preached in so distorted a form as to drive the sheep from the fold and keep the goats placidly browsing inside.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE AND ITS FOUNDERS

The significance of founders — The selfless Mrs Eddy — The Dollar Princess — Deification — The immaculate Mother — Origins — The nature of inspiration — The Quimby controversy — The Arens case — The slimness of “Scientists” — Do cures prove the truth of the religion? — Organic and functional — Dr Paget criticised — The Harness Electric Belt case — The senses — Denial of “matter” irrelevant — Does Mr Dixon exist? — Animal magnetism — The common people do not hear it gladly — A final difficulty.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE AND ITS FOUNDERS¹

MR GEORGE BERNARD SHAW has asserted that the Christian gospel would have been as effective if its Founder, instead of dying on a rood, had died in His bed ; that is to say, that the consideration of a religion can be dissociated from the personality of its founder. In respect of the Christian Faith this is manifestly ridiculous ; for it is only in a secondary sense a system of ethics, and primarily the worship of God through worship of its Founder and its saints. But in the case of any other religion, if its makers are not prepared to risk their lives for it, what kind of a religion must it be ? The personality of founders must enter into our estimate of religious values, and Christian Scientists are at one with me in considering the personality of Mrs Eddy as having an important bearing on the question of their religion. Mrs Eddy is of opinion that the true understanding of Christian Science never originated in pride, rivalry, or the

¹ The chapters on Christian Science and Tolstoyanism were written and printed before the deaths of Mrs Eddy and Count Tolstoy ; otherwise they would, to some extent, have been differently planned. As it is, I have thought it best to let them be published in their original form. I am indebted to the editors of the *Daily Chronicle*, the *Sunday Chronicle*, and the *Daily Dispatch* for permission to incorporate certain passages from articles which originally appeared in those papers. The present volume, excepting for these few excerpts, is entirely new.

deification of "self"¹ She speaks of her timidity and self-distrust, and reminds us that "meekness, selflessness, and love are the paths of His testimony."² I have by my side a copy of *The Christian Science Sentinel*, containing a letter from Mrs Eddy, dated Pleasant View, April 20, 1903. The style of this letter is characteristic, and reminds one of Dr Barry's remark about Marie Corelli, "she never uses one word where three will suffice." The supreme "happifier of existence" begins by watering a vivid sentence from the Psalms with a few verbal futilities, and having answered such minor questions as, "Who shall be the greatest?" "Who shall inherit the earth?" "Who shall dwell in Thy Holy Hill?" she comes to the major question, "Who shall be called to Pleasant View?" The answer embodies her interpretation of selflessness. "He who strives and attains . . . such an one is not called to Pleasant View for reformation or penance . . . no mesmerist nor disloyal Christian Scientist is fit to come hither. I have no use for such, and there cannot be found at Pleasant View one of this sort. 'For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord.'" . . . "It is true that loyal Christian Scientists called to the home of the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science can acquire in one year the science that otherwise might cost them half a century. But this should not be the incentive for going thither. Better far that Christian Scientists go to help their helper, and thus lose all selfishness, as she has lost it, and thereby help themselves and the whole world as she has done. . . ."

¹ *Rudimental Divine Science*, 1898.

² *Ibid.*

Mary Baker G. Eddy, President of the Massachusetts Metaphysical College, Pastor Emeritus of The First Church of Christ Scientist, and Mother of Christian Science, has indeed helped herself very liberally in the process of helping the whole world. By constituting *Science and Health* as, along with the Bible, the only official literature of the movement; by selling it at a profit of many hundreds per cent. above cost; by issuing altered editions every few years; by suggesting that loyal disciples should possess the latest, Mrs Eddy has been able to indulge her fancy for a twenty-thousand-pound house, gold bath-taps, and other little luxuries. The famous Eddy portrait and the inscribed spoon, twelve of which latter the really loyal disciple will possess, have also helped her. For many years Mrs Eddy herself trained healers and lecturers, and was led by Divine Revelation to charge each of them sixty pounds for three weeks' instruction. At first she¹ shrank from asking so much; subsequently she felt that the sum was ridiculously small and reduced the number of lessons, but was not "led" to reduce the fee. And if, indeed, a year in her courts is better than a thousand, the charge can hardly be considered excessive. Mr Dixon, who seems to be the official spokesman of the movement in England, denies that anyone is pressed to buy *Science and Health*, and in a letter to the *Daily News*, dated 19th August 1909, tells us that the exact reverse is the case. Will he deny that it is the duty of all Christian Scientists to "circulate and to sell as many of these books as they can" on pain of excommunication?

¹ *Retrospections and Introspections*, by Mrs Eddy, p. 71.

Mr Dixon speaks of Mrs Eddy's comparative poverty, and of her giving out of her £250,000 fortune £200,000 to one charity alone. One would be interested to know the name of that charity.

I have no *a priori* objection to healers making monetary charges, or to ministers of religion living by the altar, but the dollar is monstrously prominent in this particular cult, and perhaps Mr Dixon or some other Christian Scientist official would explain the logic of paying the human agent if God heals directly and not by human agency. Mark Twain's amusing, but profoundly serious and philosophic challenge concerning the payment of the imaginary healers of imaginary disease with an imaginary cheque, has not yet been taken up.

The Christian Science movement has witnessed secession after secession of one-time faithful followers. The leaders who deserted in October 1881 could no longer stand their founder's frequent outbursts of "temper, love of money, and appearance of hypocrisy." One by one, men and women of gifts and originality have come to her service, and one by one have fallen away. Some are expelled; others leave of their own accord. All are pursued with malignant and relentless hostility.

Science and Health is described as the child of an immaculate conception. Of old, the Holy Spirit and the Blessed Mary gave birth to a man, and now, the Holy Spirit and the Blessed Mary give birth to a book, and a visit to Pleasant View is like the visit of the Magi to Bethlehem. For some time relics of Mrs Eddy, the chair on which she wrote, and other sacred

objects—which, by the way, we had understood Christian Scientists to say had no existence—were exhibited for veneration. Criticism became hostile, and the veneration is temporarily abandoned. Mrs Eddy herself speaks of the apocalyptic woman, the Wonder in Heaven, clothed with the sun, as having “special reference to the present age,” and the official journal drives home the suggestion by describing the selfless Mother as the Heavenly Wonder and the Tabernacle of God with men. She is continually placed on a pinnacle by the side of Christ. “She has done good to him that hated her, blessed them that cursed her, been led as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before her shearers is dumb, so she has opened not her mouth.” It is a common note of heretics that they are always imagining the martyrdom of their safe and comfortable leaders, but such language applied to this opulent woman is a piece of colossal impertinence. I should not myself have chosen the word dumbness to characterise the virulent attacks on people who have served her faithfully for many years and have subsequently had the misfortune to disagree with her.

Mrs Eddy is a terrible despot. The suspects have no right of self-defence. She may snuff them out like candle-wicks; and what wonder, when she claims infallible judgment as to what her victims, whom she calls “malicious mental practitioners,”¹ are mentally arguing? She denies that she receives peculiar honour as Mother Mary, and, in the face of growing criticism, the title Leader has for the moment been

¹ *Christian Science History*, 1st and 2nd editions, p. 16; Mark Twain, p. 148.

substituted for that of Mother. But what is the worth of her denial and the contradictions of her followers, when one of the bye-laws (Art. xxii. Sec. 1) reads as follows: "If any female member calls herself mother, or allows it (except according to the flesh), the use of such a title shall be considered an act of disrespect to Mrs Eddy."¹ The National Christian Science Association held in New York, 27th May 1890, sent to its "Mother" "greetings and words of affection from her assembled children." The reply telegram reads: "All hail! He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the sick hath He not sent empty away. Mother Mary."

As to *Science and Health*, the earlier editions are almost unreadable, and the very latest are in not much better case. The 1886 edition is different, for she had secured the help of the Rev. James H. Wiggan as collaborator. When Mr Wiggan rewrote the book, he described himself as "keeping Mrs Eddy from making herself ridiculous," but later he came to believe that this "awfully smart woman, acute, shrewd, but not well read," did not care to have her paragraphs too clear, and delighted in so expressing herself that her words may have dubious meaning. His final comment on Mrs Eddy is that she will never understand philosophy, but "dollars and cents she understands thoroughly."

Her claim to exclusive revelation is mean and ungenerous in face of the facts. Sixteen years before Mrs Eddy made her "original discovery," Andrew Jackson Davis, the father of modern spiritism, had

¹ Cf. *Official Report*, p. 24.

published *The Physician, Nature's Divine Revelations, The Great Harmonia*. He speaks of "Divine Science," of God as "Principle," of the Devil as "evil." The actual title "Christian Science" had been used in 1840 by Abram Cowles, and appears in 1850 over the signature of the Rev. W. Adams. Mr Davis's thought and phraseology resemble Mrs Eddy's, and where he differs from her in thought, the divergence is all in his favour. His popularity was immense, and his books sold like hot cakes. Davis declined to be made the head of a Church, and on the completion of his first great work, which soon reached its thirtieth edition, he renounced any share of the profits. Davis was what Mrs Eddy proclaims herself to be, meek and unselfish.

Is it wise, at this time of day, for Christian Scientists to insist on the isolation of their leader's thought from the thought of her age? Is it worth while urging a special revelation, in the sense that she borrowed nothing from and owes nothing to any other thinker, in face of the fact that the statement is not only evidently untrue, but also evidently irrelevant? It seems a little childish to urge that Dr Quimby played no part in the inception of Christian Science.

Granted that Christian Science is true, it is no more nor less true because it is heralded by a blare of trumpets from heaven, or revealed in special vision, or suggested in the manuscript of an old gentleman called Quimby. The method and the letter killeth; the spirit giveth life. I have pointed out in the introduction to this volume that the Christian claim to originality is consistent with the fact of any amount of borrowing, and, if even Christ was not

isolated from the world of thought and feeling around Him, it would seem unnecessary for Mrs Eddy to insist on such entire independence. If on waking from a swoon some truth is left me which evermore burns in me as fulgent conviction, and changes for me and for my fellows the course of life and the face of the world, I may count that to be inspiration and revelation. But it comes to me no less assuredly and with no less inspired conviction if some man has told it me, and I have since made it my own, sealing it with the seal of my own innermost inborn nature; for my fellow-men and women are God's children and God's ministers, and God's plenipotentiaries. If Mrs Eddy cared to proclaim herself the most prominent figure in the application of a particular phase of the Gospel to modern needs, if she insisted that the realisation of God as our Health was an idea that she had made peculiarly her own, she would be on safe and solid ground. That Mrs Eddy possesses a powerful personality and distinct originality, no one wishes to deny. At about the age of fifty, when most women are beginning to feel old and spent, she began to feel young, and found herself preparing for her life's work in the urge of an overmastering idea.

The Quimby controversy is becoming wearisome, but, in face of repeated and persistent denials of borrowing on the part of Christian Scientists, it will be necessary briefly to repeat the facts. On 7th November 1862, the *Portland Courier* published a letter from Mrs Eddy, in which she describes her startling cure by a certain Dr Quimby, and denies that his method was mesmerism or animal magnetism.

"Now I can see dimly at first, and only as trees walking, the great principle which underlies Dr Quimby's faith and works; and just in proportion to my right perception of truth is my recovery. This truth, which he opposes to the error of giving intelligence to matter and placing pain where it never placed itself, if received understandingly, changes the currents of the system to their normal action. This is a science capable of demonstration . . . the truth which he establishes in the patient cures him (although he may be wholly unconscious thereof), and the body, which is full of light, is no longer in disease. After all, this is a very spiritual doctrine, but the eternal years of God are with it and it must stand firm as the Rock of Ages. And to many a poor sufferer it may be found, as by me, 'the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.'"

She was at this time asked if she believed Quimby to be the Christ? and replies in the *Courier* that he is the resurrection bringer, and rolls the stone away from the sepulchre of error. Her language surprises her friends, "whose minds are all matter." In letters still extant, she asks for absent treatment, requests treatment for stomachic troubles which she calls "small beliefs," talks of Quimby's omnipresence, and in a communication dated 1862, asserts that Quimby heals as did Christ. In early 1864 we find her studying under Dr Quimby, and a fellow-student affirms her to have been wild with excitement about his method, which he taught her to call "science," her illnesses being "errors." In a letter dated 24th April 1864, Mrs Eddy herself describes his method as "Spiritual Science." Both her letters and speeches before and

directly after Quimby's death are conclusive on the point of her indebtedness to him for the main principles of the new religion. If further proof is wanted of the nature of Quimby's teaching, it will be found in a little worn and faded scrap-book bearing on the fly-leaf the name of P. P. Quimby. His wife pasted it in for him now and then in the fifties and early sixties. It consists of newspaper comments on his work. Every comment witnesses to the fact that he was not a mesmerist, but a spiritual healer. For instance, in an article dated 3rd December 1860, appearing in the *Free Press*, Lebanon, New Hampshire, the writer says: "The foundation of his theory is that disease is not self-existent nor created by God, but that it is purely the invention of man." An extract, dated 1861, speaks of Quimby curing diseases without medicines or hypnotism. In the *Advertiser*, Portland, 13th February 1862, Quimby himself writes: "I deny disease as truth, but admit it as deception."

In the Quimby manuscripts, which pre-date *Science and Health* by many years, is found the familiar phraseology of Christian Science. Illness is error, disease does not exist except as man's illusion, disease is "false reasoning," God is "Principle," "my philosophy will free man from sin, sickness, and death." The system is actually called "Christian Science." On 16th January 1866 the doctor died.

In 1875, Mrs Eddy publishes the first edition of *Science and Health*, in which Quimby is referred to as a mesmerist to whom she is in no way indebted. Since then she has sneered at and belittled the dead

man in every conceivable way. In the 1898 edition she is explicit concerning her independence. "No human tongue or pen taught me the science contained in this book." But on 11th March 1871 she had replied to the questions of a certain Mr Wright as follows: "Has this theory ever been advertised or practised before you introduced it, or by any other individual?" Answer: "Never *advertised*, and practised only by one individual, who healed me, Dr Quimby of Portland, an old gentleman who had made it a research for twenty-five years, starting from the standpoint of magnetism, thence going forward and leaving that behind. I discovered the art in a moment's time, and he acknowledged it to me." In 1862 she denied that Dr Quimby's system was mesmerism. In 1875 she affirms that it was. Later, she affirms that it was not. She is again questioned on the point, and reverts to her assertion of 1875, asserting that the physical contact of his hands with the patient's head is conclusive proof of his mesmerism. But Mrs Eddy herself used physical contact after her alleged "revelation," and asserted that Quimby's method was that of Christ. Was Christ therefore a mesmerist? If physical contact proves mesmerism, she must answer yes, for He laid His hands on children, used clay and spittle in healing, suffered a woman to touch His garment, etc. She herself has used physical aids. Is she therefore a mesmerist?

Now, this question of mesmerism is profoundly interesting. Mesmerism, hypnotism, or "suggestion" appears in reality to be only an intense and concentrated form of the ordinary human influence that one

person exerts over another. It is now acknowledged that this science does not necessarily require the medium of touch to effect its ends, though the contact of the hands is perhaps its most usual method. In itself there is nothing either evil or good; it may be put to good or bad uses. It does not necessarily involve the weakening of the patient's will; its effects are often in this direction, but in certain cases the will is actually strengthened by its means. It is highly significant that Christian Scientists are forbidden to study books dealing with the science of suggestion. Is this because their founder knows her own methods to be mesmeric, and is interested in keeping the truth about "suggestion" as far as possible secret? It has been wisely said that the method of the Christian Science healer is to all intents and purposes that of the hypnotist. "By the silence, the motionless sitting, the subdued voice, the cabalistic sentences—for they are senseless and cannot excite the intelligence—the mind is soothed; then the suggestion is given, and in the denial of disease the repeated assertion of particular cure is pointedly made and impressed; thus directed, the mind exercises its power, all too little used, of stimulating nerval action, and so induces in the tissues the change which thought desires."

When at last Mrs Eddy's opponents confronted her with evidence which conclusively proved that Dr Quimby was not a mesmerist in her sense of the term, she began to adopt an entirely new and contradictory line of defence. There was indeed, she now admitted, some element of Christian Science in his teaching, but it was suggested to him by herself! Equally

amusing are her prevarications about her own cure. According to her 1862 statement, Dr Quimby signally succeeded in healing her ; but, according to her 1897 statement, he has signally failed. Finally she starts an altogether new theory. She admits that PERHAPS after all she was cured by him, and had PERHAPS gone about the country proclaiming her cure by him ; and had PERHAPS written letters in which she spoke of his spiritual principle of the non-existence of matter, but she adds that all this must have been done under the influence of his mesmerism. This is PERHAPS the most unfortunate story of all, for over and over again Mrs Eddy assures us that out of mesmerism can come no true thing ; yet she now tells us that mesmerism induced in her the belief that matter is non-existent—induced in her, that is to say, the foundation belief of Christian Science. Therefore, according to the founder of Christian Science, Christian Science is itself a lie.

Mrs Eddy would give anything in the world to possess those damning MSS., and has made at least one clever move to obtain them. She offered their custodians to publish them at her own expense, “ provided that I am allowed first to examine the said MSS., and do find that they were his own composition and not mine.” Needless to add, the custodians of the Quimby MSS. did not fall into the trap.

The Christian Science leaders are not trustworthy, as the following evidence will show. Some years ago a Mr Arens published a pamphlet, much of which was simply lifted from the pages of *Science and Health*, and, in 1883, Mrs Eddy quite naturally sued him for an infringement of her copyright. Arens, familiar

with the Quimby versus Eddy controversy, put up a ridiculous defence. He alleged that he had not borrowed from her, but from Quimby, but the Quimby MSS. are not published. No one charges Mrs Eddy with legal theft. She is charged with moral theft, with the theft of an idea and not the infringement of a copyright. The Court had not to decide on whether Mrs Eddy had borrowed from an unpublished work of Quimby's, but whether Arens had borrowed from a published work of Mrs Eddy's. The evidence was conclusive against him. The Court therefore decided in her favour, and issued a perpetual injunction restraining him from circulating his pamphlet. The Christian Science leaders, solely on the strength of this decision, proceeded to declare that the American Courts had decided the Quimby controversy in Mrs Eddy's favour! This false statement is reiterated in every country, on every possible occasion. Christian Science methods are ably illustrated in the person of Mr Frederick Dixon. Some time ago I had occasion to review Mr Lyman Powell's book on *Christian Science* in the pages of the *Daily News*. In the course of my review I gave the chief points of evidence enumerated in the present chapter, and urged the conclusiveness of the Quimby newspaper cuttings. Mr Dixon writes to the *Daily News* (8th April 1908) that to accuse "Mrs Eddy of plagiarising Mr Quimby's ideas because, in the days when she was painfully threading her way through the labyrinth of human theories to the goal of Christian healing, she at one time came in contact with Mr Quimby, is just as reasonable as it would be to declare that inductive

philosophy was established by Plato because Aristotle was his pupil. The truth is, that the facsimiles of the Quimby MSS., recently published in an American magazine, are not facsimiles at all, for the simple reason that the writers of the article in which they were published never saw a Quimby MSS. in their lives. This interesting fact was unearthed, not by a Christian Scientist, but by a Roman Catholic writer who visited Mr Quimby's son with respect to the matter. Mr Quimby, it is true, claims that he possesses some such MSS., but he declares equally emphatically that they are locked up in a safe and that no one but himself has ever seen them. Neither do the disseminators of the story ever care to dwell on the awkward fact that the suggestion has already once been the cause of legal proceedings in the States; nor tell how, in the year 1883, the Boston Courts ordered the destruction of a book which had infringed Mrs Eddy's copyright on the pretext that her writings were not original but had been copied from MSS. composed by Mr Quimby, and at the same time ordered the defendant to pay all Mrs Eddy's costs, and issued an injunction restraining him under the penalty of ten thousand dollars from printing any more copies of his book."

The letter contains at least three false suggestions. The first is the suggestion that our sole reason for charging Mrs Eddy with plagiarism is based on her happening at one time to come across Dr Quimby. The second is the suggestion that no one who has written on the Quimby MSS. has ever had personal access to them. It must be remembered that Mr

Dixon is answering my review of Mr Powell's book, in which the MSS. in question are quoted. Mr Powell, who is rector of a church in Northampton, Massachusetts, made a thorough examination of witnesses for and against Mrs Eddy's claim. These are his own words: "Into the vexed question of the Quimby manuscripts *which, through the courtesy of Mr George A. Quimby, I have read, there is no need to enter.*" The third is contained in the statement that disseminators of the story of Mrs Eddy's indebtedness to Quimby "never care to dwell on the awkward fact" of the Law Court proceedings. This third statement can only be called, to use the words of a contemporary, calculated and frigid, in face of the fact that Mr Powell, in the very book in question, dwells upon the proceedings of this trial in considerable detail.¹

It is therefore beyond dispute that Mrs Eddy borrowed her fundamental ideas from others, although she herself remains probably their most prominent and picturesque exponent. In August 1879 the Massachusetts Metaphysical College was founded, its buildings consisting of Mrs Eddy's parlour and its entire faculty consisting of Mrs Eddy. From these small beginnings has grown one of the most formidable and wealthy organisations in the world.

While Mrs Eddy and her healers teach that healing physical sickness is unimportant compared with the healing of sin, they would be the last to deny that the majority of their adherents have come to them for cure of body and rest of mind. While one is not

¹ Powell's *Christian Science*, p. 45.

disposed to deny the curative properties of Christian Science, one finds it almost impossible to come at the facts. Several persons known to me have been invited by Christian Scientists to investigate, but, on accepting the invitation, have invariably been put off with one excuse or another; when all else fails, one is told that the patient must on no account talk about his former symptoms, though he is encouraged to talk about them at the testimony meetings. That cures are effected seems certain, but whether the diseases healed are functional or organic, it is at present impossible to say. Even where there has been medical examination of an illness described as organic, and a cure is effected, the prejudiced doctor will plead a wrong diagnosis. Moreover, it is possible that the line of demarcation between functional and organic disease is growing fainter. Many illnesses once considered organic are now classed as functional, and undoubtedly the power of the mind may be operative for good or evil, even in so-called organic cases. Dr Stephen Paget seems to think it very absurd that Christian Science should be considered preventative in the case of catarrh, and is beside himself with amusement at the idea that the mental factor can affect a broken limb. That Dr. Paget under-estimates the power of mentality in medicine is no less certain than that Christian Scientists exaggerate it. For all that, his evidence, with however many reservations, should be taken. "Not long ago I tabulated for a book on Christian Science two hundred consecutive 'testimonies of healing.' These testimonies were published in the *Christian Science*

Sentinel between April and August of last year. The vast majority were cases of indigestion, constipation, backache, headache, tired feeling, weakness of vision, functional disabilities, downright imagination, and so forth. I inquired into the alleged healings of grave organic diseases. I found not one authenticated case of any such healing. I found nothing, absolutely nothing, that might not have got well 'of itself,' or got well, or at any rate better, under one or another of the many forms of mental treatment. The general style of these two hundred testimonies was fantastical, vague, illiterate, and absolutely worthless; they were just like the testimonials to So-and-So's pills. But the Editor of the *Sentinel* corrects the bad spelling; and solemnly publishes for the edification of the faithful all the confessions of these poor, ill-educated, neurotic lives, many of them not far from the edge of insanity.

"Christian Science does not publish her failures. So I wrote to some doctors, and other friends, asking them to tell me cases of the harm that she has done. I got back a long list of killed and wounded; I wish that it could be nailed to the doors of all her churches. I could only publish it, saying: 'To see the full iniquity of these cases the reader should be a doctor, or should go over them with a doctor. But everybody, doctor or not, can feel the cruelty, born of the fear of pain, in some of these Scientists, the downright madness threatening not a few of them, and the appalling self-will. They bully dying women and let babies die in pain; let cases of paralysis tumble about and hurt themselves; rob the epileptic of their bromide, the

syphilitic of their iodide, the angina cases of their amyl nitrite, the heart cases of their digitalis; let appendicitis go on to septic peritonitis, gastric ulcer to perforation of the stomach, nephritis to uræmic convulsions, and strangulated hernia to the *miserere mei* of gangrene; watch day after day while a man or a woman slowly bleeds to death; compel them who should be kept still to take exercise; and withhold from all cases of cancer all hope of cure. To these works of the devil they bring their one gift, wilful and complete ignorance; and their "nursing" would be a farce, if it were not a tragedy. Such is the way of Christian Science, face to face, as she loves to be, with bad cases of organic disease.' I wrote that paragraph carefully from notes of actual cases; I stick to every word of it; and I hope that all who know of similar cases will communicate with me, so that I may add them to my list."¹

This indictment is of considerable value, but the Christian Scientist might legitimately reply with as long a list of killed and wounded sent him by someone who knows the inner workings of the medical profession, and is as unsympathetic to doctors as Dr Paget is to mental healers. The blind man cured by Christ would have been harshly handled by this critic. Dr Paget (saving his "orthodoxy") would have first denied the cure, and failing that, the blindness, and failing everything, would have dismissed him as an ignorant creature who could not spell. On the other hand, it is only fair to admit that the

¹ From a paper read by Dr Stephen Paget at the Swansea Church Congress, reported in the *Guardian*, 13th Oct. 1909.

Lancet does often publish its failures and the *Christian Science Sentinel* never. The application of an abstract theory is sometimes very cruel, and the treatment by Christian Scientists in the case of certain children and others, who do not completely share their beliefs, is sometimes disastrous. There must also be taken into account the anguish of mind on the part of those who have given in their submission to *Science and Health*, and, finding themselves still uncured, begin to believe that they are absolutely forsaken of God. On the other side of the ledger must be put the encouragement by Christian Science of healthy-mindedness, the invigorating truth in the persistent statement, even if it be exaggerated, that disease and premature death are against the will of God. In so far as Christian Scientists have discouraged talk about ailments, and symptoms, and fussing about food, they have been a means of health and mental rest to our devil-ridden, decadent, modern world, and especially to that richer portion of it which habitually over-eats and under-works itself.

Granted, then, that Christian Scientists cure certain cases of disease, can we further admit their deduction that the cures prove the truth of their religious theory? Surely they would never have advanced this contention if they had considered where it would lead us. They cannot deny that drugs have been known to cure diseases. Do they, then, approve the theory of drugs? Hypnotism has undoubtedly cured diseases, do they then approve the mesmeric theory? Lourdes has had its well-attested cures, do they, then, approve

the Catholic theory? Bethshan can show a long list of cures, do they, then, approve the Evangelical theory?

The evidence in Court in the Harness Electric Belt case was conclusive as to the Harness cures, do they then admit the electrical theory? And if they point to this very Harness case, and remind us that there was no electricity in the belts, and suggest triumphantly that it was the patient's faith that healed him, we would ask them: What was the object in which the patient believed? Was it Dr Harness, or electricity? It was most assuredly not the Allness of God or the potency of Mrs Eddy's book. Grant, for the sake of argument, what in fact and reality cannot for a moment be granted, namely, that even in the case of the drug it is solely the patient's faith in that drug that cures, Christian Science is as far as ever from establishing its point, namely, that its own particular successes prove the truth of its own peculiar philosophy. So far, we have found considerable evidence for believing that which it holds in common with innumerable other faiths and systems, *i.e.* the potency of mind or spirit as a factor in medicine, and not one shred of evidence for believing that which is peculiar to itself, that which constitutes it Christian Science at all, namely, the non-existence of evil and disease, and, moreover, the non-existence of things visible, audible, and tangible.

It may be that some minds who are under the hysterical dominion of disease must be shocked out of that dominion by the exaggerated and violent appeal of Christian Science, but we doubt whether

such a deliberate disproportioning of the truth can, in the long run, continue without its revenges.

Christian Scientists must really settle what they do mean. For the present, we must take them to mean that men and women and all living beings exist as a spiritual manifestation of God; while the external, visible, tangible bodies of these beings have no existence, and that therefore the acts of man's body—ploughing, walking, writing, eating—are as purely imaginary as is the act of poisoning his food with which the lunatic charges his warder. They obviously do mean this, for Mrs Eddy tells us that, when we have overcome error, we shall propagate our kind without the union of male and female, and shall live without eating. But we must insist to the point of weariness that, if this is so, bodily disease is no more unreal than bodily health, and that carbonate of soda is no more unreal than a certain tangible and visible and purchasable book called *Science and Health*. In this case the war against drugs must have an end, for if they assert that man's body, being matter, has no existence, they must also assert that the body of a dock leaf or of a peppermint plant, being matter, has no existence. And on the perfectly sound, practical, and philosophic principle of setting a thief to catch a thief, one might set an imaginary drug to cast out an imaginary disease. I do not care in the very least whether matter is existent or non-existent. For all I know it may be a very foolish abstract term. What I demand of Christian Scientists is that they should tell me whether my body exists and the bodies of my friends, and the visible world, with its storms and

sunsets? I want further to know whether peppermint exists, whether oil exists, and corn, and wine, and cinnamon, and the leaves of the eucalyptus tree? Are they as fantasmal as the diseases they allay and the bodies to which they are applied? Is sleepiness as non-existent as sleeplessness, a good digestion as fantastical as a bad one? Is fecundity an unreal nightmare like sterility? Does nothing really exist excepting God—and perhaps mammon?

In *Science and Health* I am taught that all things cognisable by the senses are illusions and have no real existence. This, I suppose, answers the foregoing questions in the dismal negative.

Mr Frederick Dixon asserts¹ that I have completely failed to grasp the teachings of Christian Science. I do not understand that "All is infinite Mind and its infinite manifestation." He then goes on to tell us once more that matter cannot therefore exist. This is quite uninteresting to me. What I want him now to tell me is, whether he himself does or does not exist, as a deduction from this All-Mind theory. My senses tell me that he does; but Mrs Eddy tells me that if my senses tell me he does, he certainly does not.

Take the act of eating an egg. Does Mrs Eddy deny the individuality of the eater, or the act of eating, or the reality of the egg?

I know that, as a good Christian Scientist, when my sense of smell registers a bad egg, that is all moonshine; but when my senses register an egg at all, is that all mortal mind, or animal magnetism? For in

¹ *Health Record*, May 1908.

Christian Science every illusion, every sin, every sickness is due to animal magnetism, and animal magnetism is mortal mind, so that old serpent, the Devil, has crawled back again, this time, into Mrs Eddy's little Eden, and once more we are faced with the old difficulties. True, the Christian Faith has them too, but then the Christian Faith does not profess to explain all mysteries. Let us see how far we have travelled.

All is mind and all is God. Sin, disease, and death must be delusions, nor can they have real existence. But of what are they the delusions? For if all is mind and mind is God, they can hardly be the delusions of God. No, says Mrs Eddy, they are the delusions, not of mind, but of mortal mind. But if there be such a thing as mortal mind and mortal mind is not God, how can all be God? Whence is mortal mind derived? Is it derived from mind, which is God? But Mrs Eddy tells us that God, or pure mind, can have no delusions. If mortal mind exists, it cannot, according to Christian Science, have delusions. If it does not exist, it is itself a delusion. Therefore, that which produces the delusion, is itself delusion. The delusion produced is the outcome of a producing delusion. Of what, then, is the non-existent mortal mind a delusion? It must be a delusion of All-Mind or God-Mind, which we are assured has no delusions.

Mrs Eddy joins in the popular outcry against creeds, but anything more dogmatic than her ideas would be hard to find in the whole range of history. It is indeed this assumption of finality that is so dear

to the man in the street who wants his thinking done for him and is prepared to purchase infallibility at a good price.

Worship, not criticism, is the order of the day, Christian Scientists are not generally students ; they are conventional folk, who have grown profoundly dissatisfied with the Christianity of the last century, and are yet unable to free themselves from it, unable to reconstruct a faith for themselves. For the most part, they belong to the comparatively idle classes. True, certain poor people—principally servants—have been treated without charge, by Christian Scientist healers ; but, on the whole, the poor have not had the gospel preached to them, nor have the common people heard it gladly. Christian Scientist churches are attended by just those classes of people who, by living on the labour of others, have plenty of leisure for introspective fussing about their little ailments. Love and a great many other abstract virtues with capital letters make up their creed, and they hail with joy a gospel which will help them not to worry about their sins nor about the slums, which will enable them to keep cool and comfortable, and which will cure them of their smaller ills. The new thought may have been expressed more wisely elsewhere than in the pages of *Science and Health*. They know nothing of that. It is through Mrs Eddy's book they have "got religion," and Mrs Eddy says there is no other book like it in the world, and they believe her.

There is one other point in Christian Science which I fear I shall never understand. If the senses of

hearing, and seeing, and feeling are illusory, and register nothing but lies, how is it that the Christian Science healers are never tired of telling us of the marvellous cures in cases of deafness, blindness, and paralysis that God has effected through them? How mysterious are the ways of the Almighty, in restoring to mankind, through the mediumship of Mrs Eddy, the use of those sensory organs, which are in themselves the great evil, and can register nothing but delusion! But there, we must leave all this to the all-wisdom of the all-mother, for has she not herself told us that unless we become as children, we cannot understand her? Sometimes I think that, when that happy though childish consummation is effected, we may still find her a little difficult to follow.

POPULAR DETERMINISM AND MR BLATCHFORD

The question at issue—Man's existence at stake—The meaning of man—A little lower than the dogs—Response and responsibility —Unconditioned freedom not held by the Church—The three factors — The importance of instinct — From Philip drunk to Philip sober—Blatchford the sentimentalist—Determinism and punishment — Pity and patronage — Blatchford a decadent Christian—Blatchford and Calvin—Evil enthroned as God—Buddhist despair.

POPULAR DETERMINISM AND MR BLATCHFORD

THE question at issue between determinists and their opponents is not so much the question of man's free-will as of man himself; his very existence is at stake, his existence not as steam-engine, nor cabbage, nor as adder, nor as chessman, but as man.

The terms will, emotion, reason, do not stand for so many separate and distinct entities, nor does man possess will as a child possesses a box of paints. All these terms are but convenient signs that we have invented to express the mysterious activities of that mysterious human being who lurks behind them. They are terms invented to sum up the results of our observation of how man feels and thinks and acts. They are terms invented to express a supreme fact, namely, the discovery that a certain being differs from other beings, in that he possesses initiative which they do not possess, or more accurately, in that he possesses in a high degree an initiative which they possess in low degree, an initiative, moreover, which mechanical things do not possess at all. This large difference between certain beings and certain other beings, this total difference between certain beings and machines,

we put into words. The being possessed of a high degree of initiative we call man. The three letters, M, A, N, mean a being with initiative, volition, power of self-analysis. To deny the existence of such a being is to empty those three letters of all significance. God made man a little lower than the angels. Blatchford makes him a little lower than the dogs; in point of fact, he abolishes him altogether by abolishing his distinctive characteristics.

God's omniscience and man's volition present difficulties. The difficulties are not invented by theology. The difficulties are inherent in the facts of life. The problem of evil is not solved by shifting the responsibility from creature to Creator, for, difficult as it is to understand the rationale of evil in the creature, it is a thousand-fold more difficult to understand the rationale of evil in the fountain-head of being itself. My grievance against popular free-willers and popular determinists is that they do not even see the difficulties. They attempt to solve them by ignoring them. They leave out all the lines and shadows. We ask for a portrait, and they give us an oleograph. What I would now ask Mr Blatchford to give us is some definition of man which will distinguish him from sub-human creatures.

The fact is, Robert Blatchford did not originally care two straws about the philosophic question of free-will versus determinism, but did care consummately for the bottom dogs, and by the bottom dogs he at first meant the outcasts and the oppressed. Mr Alexander Webster writes of his humanity: "It enthalls him so completely that he has no mind for

anything else. He is obsessed by humanity, has such sympathy with it, and is so tender over it, that he cannot permit any depreciation, scorn, or maltreatment of it. He is an enthusiast for the lowest. He carries the Bottom Dog in his arms." Small blame to him that his determinism is no abstract intellectual theory. He argues: "Men blame and punish these poor wretches ; but they are not responsible for their acts," and, in order to ensure their immunity from blame, he suggests the theory that no one is responsible for his acts. No one should ever be praised for anything, nor blamed for anything ; we are but pawns and knights and ivory kings and queens on the chessboard of a capricious Player. What greater depreciation of man than this is imaginable, what more abysmal contempt of one's kind ? One does not blame a jelly-fish for stinging, nor a stone for tripping one up ; if one did, one would get no response. A dog, an ape, or an elephant responds to blame or praise in some degree. Man and woman respond in far greater degree. The dog is differentiated from the stone by the measure of its response to praise or blame. The man is differentiated from the dog by this greater capacity for response. The inventors of language have created a short term for this capacity to respond. The term is responsibility. In denying responsibility to man, Mr Blatchford denies to man his ability to respond. No creature, therefore, according to Mr Blatchford, since the beginning of the world, has ever responded to praise or blame, nor to the end of time could ever do so.

It will perhaps now be seen that the question is

not one of Mr Blatchford's theory versus the theory of the Catholic Church, but of Mr Blatchford's theory versus the facts of the Catholic Church, the language of the dictionaries, and the universal experience of mankind.

Mr Blatchford may reply: "Granted that universal experience is against human irresponsibility, it is, at least, as much against unconditioned human freedom." The reply is, of course, unanswerable; but then no Catholic theologian of any age or country has ever taught the unconditioned freedom of human volition. On the contrary, the Church has explicitly and deliberately (will the determinists forgive the use of a word necessarily obliterated from their vocabulary?) condemned free-will, as defined and attacked in the *Clarion*, as a damnable superstition.

The Church's teaching may perhaps best be expressed by way of analogy. Suppose a man with an hereditary lameness is making towards a given spot, and, to get there, is obliged to climb a fence. The free-will school of thought deny the hereditary lameness and the environing fence. The determinist school of thought deny the man who wills to overcome them. A third school of thought, the traditional Catholic or orthodox Christian school, deny neither the man's will nor the conditioning factors of fence and lameness.

The Church teaches and has always taught that man possesses initiative, but that human volition is at first embryonic and is to *some* extent—but not wholly—conditioned by heredity and environment. It is indisputable that man feels responsibility, and feels

also that the circumstances of his ancestry, and of his surroundings, modify, while they do not obliterate, that responsibility. Which is more likely to be true, the threefold instinct of mankind, or the twofold opinion of Mr Robert Blatchford?

But, say the determinists, "We reject instinct; we will not for one moment accept evidence adduced from what you call fundamental human instincts." Some years ago I dipped into this controversy with an appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober, asking determinists the following question: "If man has no initiative and no responsibility, how account for Philip, who, sober at midday and drunk at midnight, next morning instinctively feels that he was less master of himself at midnight than at midday? He believes himself to have had no control at midnight, but some small power of control at midday. He believes himself not to have used that embryonic power he might have used. He is dissatisfied, miserable, and determines to try again." Now, would Mr Blatchford tell him that his feeling of degradation was silly, as the act of filling himself with beer was as little his own responsible act as was the jug's at the counter when the barman filled it with the same liquid? Would Mr Blatchford tell him that he was equally irresponsible at midday and midnight, equally the sport of Fate at both periods? Would he tell him: "The jug has no repentance, why then repent? One can never be master of oneself, for there is no such thing as mastering self? One can never respond to praise or reproaches, for there is no such thing as responsibility?" What *would* he tell him?

If the wretched man replied: "But I feel I can do better if I try," Mr Blatchford answers: "My poor fellow, you cannot try, unless you are driven by some power entirely beyond your own control."¹ Thus Mr Blatchford takes the bottom dogs into his arms, or such of them as he can catch, and in the innocence of his heart inoculates them with his morphinist doctrine and lays them tenderly down on the threshold of hell.

The *Clarion's* answer was as follows: "Philip's instinct of responsibility was as entirely illusory as the one-time instinct of men, to the effect that the earth was flat." This "argument" is made to do service over and over again, and is, in fact, the centre pillar of the determinist position. It is very doubtful, however, whether the former opinion about the earth's shape can be classed with fundamental instincts. It is not an instinct, but a theory based on insufficient observation. An opinion about the geography of the earth can hardly be placed alongside of such fundamental feelings as the desire for praise and the consciousness of wrong-doing. Mr Blatchford himself apparently admits this, for he couples the desire for

¹ The determinist sometimes answers: "Philip does not really determine to do better; he is simply driven to do better by the tyranny of desire—the desire for amendment conquering for the moment the desire for drink. But Philip is not an unreal abstraction and his desires the reality, but his desires are merely the unreal though useful lines of latitude and longitude drawn across the map of his mysterious personality. "Out of the whole mass of motives existing in each particular case, the Self—the fact which, according to Spencer, is to each beyond all others most certain—has the power of attending to some, to the neglect of others, and the strengthening of those attended to; and moreover by the faculties of memory and deliberation we are enabled, not only to attend to one of, or select between a number of motives, but to *create motives of our own*," p. 51, *Anti-Nunquam*, Warschauer, 5th edition.

the approbation of one's fellow-creatures with the love of children and the love of adventure ; but in that case one hardly sees why, if the feeling of remorse and the desire of praise are to be dismissed as the ravings of a maniac, on what showing the love of one's kind and the love of adventure should be retained as admirable. What now becomes of the instinct of pity for the bottom dog which led the unfortunate determinists into this controversy ?

I have suggested that it was instinct and not reason that was responsible for Mr Blatchford's book. This suggestion was confirmed by a study of his treatment of the problem of prisons and punishment. Every reformer is conscious of the futility of our present system, and sets his face against vindictive punishments. Every humanist knows that society is more guilty than the outcast, and that the downtrodden are to a large extent the victims of our common stupidity and cruelty. But Mr Blatchford goes far beyond this ; his riotous sense of pity obliterates every other consideration ; for him, the abuse of a thing always takes away the use. Having once secured, as he imagines, his doctrine of irresponsibility, he now begins to apply it in every direction. It is by his application of it that his true motives are made apparent. Having repudiated instinct, he still allows himself to be swayed by this unrestrained instinct for pity, and triumphantly exclaims : " If no man is responsible for his acts, no man can be punished for his acts." Is this not a frank abandonment of reason and the enthronement of unrestrained sentiment ? For the more learned and cautious determinists have

always perceived that punishment can be defended on the fatalist theory that, if man cannot help sinning, society cannot help punishing. Or again, punishment is merely the modification, and prison the alteration, of a man's environment. On the determinist hypothesis, that man is merely machinery, prison grooves for men are at least as defensible as rails for trains. So, having reduced man to the level of wood and steel and iron, in order to show him irresponsible, unblameworthy, and unpunishable, Mr Blatchford is faced with the fact that these materials are drilled, imprisoned, and regimented in every conceivable direction, are cut and slashed and melted and beaten into shape in the relentless workshop and at the flaming forge.

The root of the popular determinists' error is the substitution of sentimentality for sentiment, and sentimentality may be defined as the riot of the feelings unchecked by reason or the monomaniacal exaltation of one sentiment to the degradation of all the rest. If we contend against the present defence of the bottom dog, it is not because we underrate the importance of defending him, nor undervalue the large-heartedness of his defender, but because we are assured that his particular theory is no defence at all. Pity is unwholesome stuff until it be admixed with other ingredients. Wholesale pity is first cousin to patronage, and there are few dogs so abysmally gone under as to prefer patronage even to blows and starvation.

The under dog will not always care to be told that he cannot possibly get up until those twin monsters,

heredity and environment, cease mauling him. It may be that a hard and cruel philosophy drives men to overvalue the things it will not tolerate, that the cruel philosophy of a tyrant God and reprobate man and everlasting torment has driven men in revolt against its austerity to overvalue mercy, pity, goodness, and love—not, indeed, such a love as many waters cannot quench, for that is stern and terrible, but the thing that modern people call love.

Is not Mr Blatchford's revolt but part of the modern Christian world's revolt? How seldom one hears a sermon about hell! How sugary is the heaven of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*! How insistent is the modern pulpit on the virtues of toleration and non-resistance! How universal the phrase about hating the sin and loving the sinner! The Christ who is moved with indignation, who thunders against scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, who denounces the king as "that fox," who is rude to the rich and flogs the money-changers, the Christ who cried, "I come not to bring peace but a sword!" the Christ who, because He is an incarnation of Divine Love, is also an incarnation of Divine Wrath, the modern Christian world has crucified Him. Its drawing-rooms, I cannot say ring with the shout, but echo with the lady-like whisper, "Not this man, but Barabbas." *Now*, Barabbas is a gentleman. There was once a Christian Religion of men and women. We have replaced it with a Christianity for gentlewomen; love has become sickly altruism, and "Blessed are the poor in spirit" has been turned into "Blessed are the poor-spirited." In exaggeration of protest against this exaggeration

arises Nietzsche, who attacks the modern Christ for his mildness, while Blatchford is attacking the ancient Christ for his wrath. The modern Christian condemns the outspoken criticisms of Blatchford, but essentially he approves the sentiment behind them. If Blatchford were a Christian, would he not worship just such a Christ as is depicted in the stained-glass window, the plaster cast, and the pious booklet? He condemns Christian inconsistency of action, but he also is in the sentimental stream of modern Christianity, and conventional Christianity is the decadent heresy of which the orthodox Traditional Faith is the truth.

It is intensely significant that Mr Blatchford had, on his own confession, several alternatives before him—either there was no God; or God was unknowable; or there was a God, good but impotent; or there was an all-powerful God who had created men and was therefore responsible for their acts. Why has he chosen the latter alternative? Is it because the instinct of responsibility is so natural and human and persistent that even the determinists are compelled to retain some sort of Being for the purpose of their praise or blame?

Mr Blatchford has been called a Calvinist, and he would be the first to admit the likeness of himself to Calvin, in that he believes in an Almighty Being who creates, and determines, and predestinates; but he would indignantly repudiate the term in that he is prepared to fight the Mighty Tyrant with whose judgments Calvin was well pleased. Such sentiment again does credit to his heart rather than his head; the wheel has come round full circle, the popular

determinists set out to solve the mystery of evil by the gospel of the gay irresponsibility of mankind; the world was to be made merry and glorious by cleansing it from its dark beliefs and ghostly superstitions. And, in place of these contemptible Christian imaginings, they have enshrined cruelty in the Central Life from which we draw our life, have darkened the world with the shadow of Almighty Evil, have fouled the well-springs of every creature's energy and existence. We begin to understand Mr Blatchford's preference for Buddhism over the Christian Faith. Holding such a philosophy of despair as he holds, existence itself must have come to mean for him the supreme evil. The Nirvana of determinists must be complete annihilation.

REASON VERSUS RATIONALISM

A dead controversy — Reason versus rationalism — Natural law — Ethical and Labour churches—Positivism—The case of Mr George Bernard Shaw — Rationalist ethics — Spurious holiness — Failure of the secularist movement.

REASON VERSUS RATIONALISM

THE subject of rationalism recalls to the mind a controversy long since dead, which raged round the question of miracles. Our immediate forefathers seemed to have thought that those significant and supernatural acts recorded in the New Testament were wrought by the Christ in order to prove that He was God. They seem to have argued that He broke the law of nature every now and then in order to impress unbelievers and drive them by a sort of *tour de force* into His fold. On this showing, the more unbelieving the neighbourhood, the more important would it have been for Him to terrorise them with such displays ; but we are expressly told that, in His own native country, "He could do no mighty works there because of their unbelief." When people sought for signs He refused to work them, and taught that there were certain types of mind which would not be convinced, "though one rose from the dead." The New Testament itself almost invariably avoids the Greek term for miracle or wonder-work. The rationalists replied by denying the possibility of any break in the laws of nature, and, in consequence, the accuracy of the New Testament reports. But all sorts

of things have been happening since the days of this nineteenth-century controversy. We no longer insist on the verbal accuracy of each separate passage of Scripture, although we believe that Scripture does, on the whole, give us a true portrait of the Christ and of the kind of things that He did. Then, again, we have discovered that all this talk about breaking laws of nature is nonsensical, for the "laws of nature" is only a term for our observation of what actually happens. If the physical resurrection, or the Virgin Birth, or the raising of Lazarus, actually happened, they happened not as contradictions of some fixed and unalterable law, but as exceptional illustrations of those mysterious workings of nature which men so little comprehend. If proof is forthcoming for these things, we must widen our view of nature so as to include them. We are becoming daily more healthily agnostic in matters of detail. Physical scientists are more willing to admit the limitations of their knowledge and to consider it possible that there may be more things in heaven and earth than were dreamt of by nineteenth-century dreamers. The study of telepathy, the latest theories about matter conceived as force, the enormous collection of facts about appearances at the moment of death, the growing scientific conviction of the influence of mind over body, all these things have changed the face of scientific philosophy and have made men more willing to believe that there is considerable substratum of truth in the New Testament record of so-called miracles.

On the other hand, we do not feel that miraculous power is the final proof of divinity. The mere

possession of super-normal power does not constitute a man divine ; but that Christ, having this power to an extraordinary degree, should have used it always divinely, showing His almighty power most chiefly in mercy and pity, that does strike us as divine. The more alert, therefore, among both Christians and rationalists have abandoned the ground upon which that particular battle was fought, and the war now rages round more important positions.

The Rationalist Press prospectus describes rationalism as "a mental attitude which unreservedly accepts the supremacy of reason, and aims at establishing a system of philosophy and ethics verifiable by experience and independent of all arbitrary assumptions of authority." In what sense is the term "reason" used? In what field is it supreme—in that of contemplation, or of action, or of both? What kind of experience is meant? Would emotional experience be counted? Is not all human experience, strictly speaking, emotional? What is an arbitrary assumption of authority? As a matter of fact, we divide man up into innumerable parts—reason, will, emotions, etc.—and very possibly none of them have any more reality than the lines of latitude and longitude on the map. The term "reason" is a fairly convenient symbol for some dimly apprehended aspect of man. All these expressions are shadows, and behind the shadows lurks a being, mysterious, incomprehensible, unfathomable, and the name of that being is man. If one could only persuade the rationalists to be a little less agnostic about God and a little more agnostic about man!

The reasoning faculty has been defined in bewilderingly different ways by a multitude of experts. "Reason," as commonly understood, would seem to mean the power of analysis, the power of putting two and two together, and further, of making certain deductions from knowledge thus gained. Do rationalists seriously want us to believe in the supremacy of this power? Do they think it a more potent or important force in man's make-up than the power of the affections. Colonel Ingersoll used to give as an example of the futility of a mere reward and punishment religion the case of a man drowning and the crowd on the bank. He asked what would be the motive force that would impel the rescuer to plunge in? He rightly dismissed the idea that anyone would risk his life on calculation of a future hell if he drew back or a future heaven if he plunged. Man is not such a calculating animal as that. While he was calculating the man would have gone under; but this applies with equal force to the calculations of the analytical reason. The only power, as Ingersoll himself pointed out, that could with any certainty be counted on in this instance was the power of the affections, which seems to be a conclusion eminently in harmony with the dogma "God is love," and eminently out of harmony with the dogma "Reason is supreme"—unless, indeed, rationalists include the affections under the term "reason," which would be a slipshod arrangement of which they are apparently not guilty, for they speak of the emotions as only safe forces when controlled by reason.

What a pity that rationalists should not acquaint

themselves with the teaching of the Christian religion on the subject of sin! Throughout the work one feels they cannot disentangle themselves from the atmosphere of the Sunday School they had the misfortune to attend as boys. Perhaps they were taught in class the missionary hymn which announces that every prospect pleases, and only man is vile. Now, that is emphatically not the teaching of the Christian Church, the orthodox doctrine being that human nature is essentially good, however much it may be buried underneath the rubbish of ignorance and evil. Man is not fundamentally vile, though he often behaves vilely.

Rationalists are perpetually telling us they cannot believe certain things to have happened, because they would not be "in accordance with natural law." In *The Meaning of Rationalism*, Mr Charles Watts insists that "it must be shown . . . *that the outlines of Christ's life are consistent and in accordance with natural law.*" If it is unfortunate that the opponents of the Faith do not trouble to acquaint themselves with the A B C of the Christian position, it is even more lamentable that these self-elected champions of science should show themselves completely ignorant of the A B C of physical science.

Science knows absolutely nothing of this absolutism of "natural law," as Professor Huxley endeavoured to teach the simple bishops of his day. The sole question to be asked of any alleged occurrence is: "What is the evidence for it?" If the evidence is good and it seems really to have happened, then it must be accepted and becomes part and parcel of so-called "natural law."

The law simply means our observation of phenomena, our mental note about things that happen. If, for instance, the Virgin Birth could be proved, it would not contradict nature; it would be nature; it would be a new illustration of how nature sometimes works.

This obsession by natural laws is obvious throughout the pages of *The Rationalist Catechism*, by Aletheia, M.D. The author tells us he was not created, for nothing that exists was created, for creation means "made suddenly from nothing." He continues: "Why cannot anything be made out of nothing?"—and gives an unintelligible answer. Later on he speaks of the Ascension. It would be impossible for anyone living on this earth to ascend into the skies. "And Jesus could not have done this?—No. Why?—Because His body could not have resisted the law of gravitation." Not all rationalists are as ignorant and irrational as Aletheia. But none of them seem to be aware that a whole host of orthodox Catholic theologians would repudiate the *ex nihilo* theory. It is unnecessary to defend a literalist view of the Ascension, but could anything be less scientific than its denial on the ground that a human body cannot "resist the law of gravitation"? It is noticeable that rationalists express great contempt for Pagan philosophy. Aletheia tells us that the efficacy of prayer is nonsense because we have borrowed the idea from our Pagan ancestors. Worship is of no use at all, unless it be "admiration for the laws of nature." This is how our author defines rationalist philosophy. It is "completely unified knowledge of the manifesta-

tion of the unknowable." Surely the philosophy should be re-christened irrationalism?

The rationalists find fault with Christ's character. Christian Socialists claim Him as Socialist, individualists claim Him as individualist, spiritualists claim Him as spiritual regenerator, etc. So runs the argument. Therefore, how small a man must He have been. To my simple mind, it must be confessed the argument points all the other way. If so many diverse people proclaim Him Lord, and find their satisfaction in Him, He is probably a complex and titanic personality. Mr Watts sees clearly two portraitures of Christ in the Gospels—"the one, forgiving, loving, sympathetic; the other, gloomy and vengeful; these two portraitures are diametrically opposed to each other." (!) What does our author mean by love? One suspects him of meaning a contemptibly weak benevolence, a watery kindness, which has nothing in common with that consuming passion which many waters cannot quench. He has yet to learn that great love is not incompatible with anger, and that the Supreme Lover must often be "moved with indignation."

Rationalist ethics are generally the ethics of non-conformity gone flat. There is seldom advanced in meetings of secular or ethical societies any original suggestion about morality. They have rejected, if ever they knew, the enthusiasm of theology for a flat-footed pursuit of morality considered as God. They have not thrown the ethical conceptions of Queen Victoria into the melting-pot. They do not attempt to trans-value the values of Upper Tooting.

They neither re-interpret nor develop ethical tradition. Before they could be of any help to us they must learn that morality was made for man, not man for morality. At present their Sunday Services are like champagne with the cork out.

In vain does one flee from the ethical societies to positivist churches, from the worship of abstract good to the worship of abstract humanity. "All men know," writes Dr Stanton Coit, "at least sufficiently well for a starting-point, what goodness in human character is. But the idea of a personal Creator of the universe has baffled the speculative efforts of the best-disciplined and most philosophic minds." This may be so, but children and wayfaring men are excited about God and bored with "the good." Dr Coit believes that "the good" is the only bond of religious union, and that ethicist lecturers would induce men to remove all other qualifications for membership in churches, and that men driven away by dogmatic restraints "will immediately form themselves into societies for the spread of goodness." These societies, he thinks, will stand equal in dignity and power with Christ's conception of a Kingdom of God on earth. He believes that the adoration of the good comes to-day with all the freshness and vigour of a new revelation. So he writes in 1900; so he could hardly write in 1912. There is no such thing as goodness apart from people. To love goodness in the abstract is to love that which never has had, and never will have, any existence. That is why many leave secularist and ethical societies for the pursuit of positivism or the worship of humanity.

But humanity has no more existence than the good. If it is difficult for a child—or, for the matter of that, a man—to love God and to love his neighbour as himself, he will not find it any easier to love humanity and the unknowable, even though the high priest of positivism explains humanity to him as the “permanent and collective power of the human organism.”¹

Humanity, according to the positivists, is to be known by science.² “That is puzzling. Most of us know what we do of it by rocking-cradles, milk, kisses, fisticuffs, tears, winks, becks, nods, whistles, frowns, and such-like, not by science, unless every experiment is science and not only ordered things tied up in trusses.”

There is, of course, a sense in which every reasoner might be called a rationalist, but secular societies do not like one so to name oneself unless one happens to arrive at the conclusion of secularist orthodoxy. Rationalism and atheism are terms interchangeable in many rationalist circles. The faithful would, for instance, exclude Mr Gilbert Chesterton, because by reason he has come to a conservative Catholic conclusion; or myself, because by reason I have come to Catholic conclusions of another sort; or Mr George Bernard Shaw, because he has free-thought himself into some kind of Theism. Atheist and agnostic rationalists have not contributed to the upbuilding of a modern ethic in this country, if we except the work of Mr Karl Pearson

¹ *The Philosophy of Common Sense*, by Frederic Harrison.

² C. L. Marson, *Academy*, 4th April 1908.

and Mr Belfort Bax. Mr Pearson's criticism of Mr Arthur Balfour should be studied carefully by those who wish to gain some knowledge of agnostic rationalism at its best. But perhaps Mr Belfort Bax's *Essays in Socialism* are of equal interest, especially his chapter on "The Futility of Holiness," where he speaks of the current Christian morality as summed up in "neurotic introspection and mere self-sacrifice." These essays were, of course, penned some years ago. They are not good criticism of the casuistry of the day, and are ludicrously bad criticism of the casuistry of the Middle Ages. Their complaint can only be allowed as against Mid-Victorian Protestantism, and even the nineteenth century gave us Maurice, Robertson, Tennyson, and other Christian philosophers, with whose work Mr Bax should be acquainted. Mr Bax surely misreads "the Catholic saint." He is of opinion that the majority of mankind, while in theory adhering to the neurotic saintly ideal, were preserved by their healthy understanding, by the "blessed animal within them," from becoming "mere lumps of morbidity such as a St Anthony, a St Bernard, or a St Teresa." There was, indeed, a morbid strain in Anthony and Teresa, but one must remember that there is an almost infinite variety of types in Catholic saintship, and that it was in spite of, and not because of, morbidity that the saints in question were canonised. It would be difficult to find anything neurotic in the visions of that most robust of martyrs, St Vibia Perpetua. St Catherine of Sienna would have shocked the agnostic drawing-rooms of to-day by an outspokenness which reminds one of Walt Whitman.

I sometimes think we are saved by the saints but damned by their later biographers, and Mr Belfort Bax might justly complain of even the joyous St Francis of Assisi and his companion, if he had come across them for the first time in the distorting mirror of the fourteenth-century *Fioretti*. In this decadent account the saints are turned into spiritual ego-maniacs who brandished their humility in the face of the crowd. Christ warns you against pride. Imitate His humility. You have a preaching engagement in Rome and an admiring crowd is coming to meet you. Abase yourself; turn its admiration of you into scorn, let it pelt you with offal, while you see-saw with children. The Blessed Christ humbled Himself by playing with children. His Franciscan followers humiliated themselves and played the fool with children. So reads this nasty little book. As if anybody was ever abased by see-sawing with urchins, except at the moment when his end touches the ground, and of that literal abasement it is irrefutably true that whosoever abases himself shall be exalted. The writers of the *Fioretti* seem to think that the early Franciscans invented some daring foolery of self-abasement in imitation of Christ and in caution of their immortal souls, but Christ did not consider His soul by considering the children. He simply considered children. But there is nothing of all this in the earlier lives of Francis. The people's nickname for the original Franciscans was "God's Jugglers." The nickname arose, not because they played the fool to humble themselves—they were saints, and saints find too much fun in loving other people to worry much about their own

souls—but because it amused themselves and children and other good people, and scandalised religious prigs and other bad people. Our Lord's eating and drinking with sinners must equally have shocked the pious and amused Himself, and one can well imagine church-goers explaining it away in the interests of one of their idolatrous abstractions, holy obedience, holy humility, and the like. For, unfortunately, the Christian churches sometimes become as dull as positivist and ethical societies, and follow after the like abstractions. But the saints are different. The first Franciscans, and especially their leader, were moved to wrath at cruel sloth and laxity; they were severe with themselves, not because they despised their bodies, but because they must keep themselves lithe and alert. They were full of laughter, and moved the people to merriment and to tears. To preach naked before prudes, or to spin like a top in a circle of dullards, or to play pranks upon the Pharisees, these are the acts of the Catholic saints. They are living illustrations of the humanism of Christ, and not mere imitators of the copy-book Christs of ethical societies, Christian or non-Christian. That title "God's Jugglers" should be remembered by Mr Belfort Bax. He should also remember the rollicking jollity of the Middle Ages, and the jests of the *Acta Sanctorum*, and the blessed Thomas More's last words to his judges, hoping they would all meet in God's merry heaven. He should remember also the rebuke of St Charles Borromeo to the pious brother who, horrified at the saint's devotion to billiards, asked: "What would you do if Our Lord were suddenly to

come and find you at the billiard table?" "I should pray," answered Charles, "that my next stroke should be the best I had ever made."

Good, easy-going Mr Bax is stirred with the rest of us at the heroism of Port Royal, but even the later Roman Church, in spite of its neurotic prayers and hymns, condemns the Port Royalists for their asceticism carried to the point of heresy. The most characteristic of the Port Royalists is Saint-Cyran, whose creed may be summed up in the saying: "Act as if the world contained only yourself and God." All sensuous human impulses, generous and mean alike, are barred. He is confessor to the nuns, and tells them they must give up their little garden plots because to love a patch of private ground is ungodly. The pupils should always be taught the most distasteful lessons, but must not be strained too far, for they are "too young to be spiritual." Mr Bax must remember that Rome condemns all this, and that its condemnation is well within the tradition of the Catholic Church and of the Gospel. We have yet to learn that Christ had been teaching the little child set in the midst the most distasteful lessons on the sands of Galilee, modifying them only when He remembered that it was too young to be spiritual. If children are saved, "converted" children are most assuredly damned.

Mr Belfort Bax will not be pleased to learn that in this criticism of introspection and inwardness he is preaching the true Christian ethic, but perhaps we may comfort him somewhat by putting him down as a Christian heretic, for his protest is too exaggerated

for the orthodox proportion of faith. If the ascetic heretic regards pain for its own sake as valuable, the comfortable Mr Bax would seem to regard pleasure for its own sake as valuable, whereas Walt Whitman comes much nearer indexing the Christian position when he suggests that pain and pleasure may be alike good as leading unto life. But certainly the following question and answer in Bax's Catechism show him to be not far from the ethics of the Kingdom of God:—

“But are not the ethics of Socialism essentially altruistic? If that is so, can you have any finer expression of them than is to be found in Christianity, *e.g.* in the Sermon on the Mount?

“Socialist ethics are neither altruistic nor egoistic; they are intrinsically neither selfish nor unselfish. As with other abstractions characterising the phase of human development generally called civilisation—such as the differentiation into separate and even antagonistic classes of the various social functions of labour and direction separated and embodied in the two antagonistic classes of master and servant—so in ethics we find a purely factitious antagonism set up between the individual and society. This antagonism is based to a large extent on the economic individualism which separates and antagonises the material interests of the individual with his neighbour and with society at large. Given this antagonism, it naturally becomes a virtue on the part of the individual to sacrifice himself morally for the benefit of others. Where, however, the condition is changed—and in proportion to the degree of this change—the reason for such a sacrifice disappears, and to that extent it ceases to be a virtue. The virtue lies in the sacrifice rendered to one's neighbour or to society, not in the amount of injury to oneself: thus, it would be meritorious to rescue anyone from a burning building, even at the cost of personal suffering or of life itself, and it is difficult to conceive of any set of circumstances in which the reason for such an act might not obtain—but the good would be in

the rescue, not in the suffering or sacrifice entailed. Loss, injury, or suffering is essentially an evil in itself, even if self-inflicted and for a good object. Socialism presupposes a condition of things in which the good of all will mean the good of each; and a society so constituted that the individual cannot serve himself without serving society, and cannot injure society without injuring himself. Thus, there will no longer be altruism and egoism, selfishness and unselfishness, existing as antagonistic abstractions, but selfishness and unselfishness must necessarily be alike social in the general run of conduct."

The secularist movement has been more than once mentioned in the chapter. This movement dates, in England, from about 1830, though the term itself appears somewhat later. Secularism is a theory of life which aims at developing man's physical, mental, and moral powers without dependence on the doctrines of God and a future life. It urges men to set their affections upon this world, making the best they can of the present life. By this, few if any secularists would understand "let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die." Not their bitterest enemies could accuse them of undue merriment. As a rule, secularists are at one with those Christians who teach that the material and sensuous life have their due importance for one's individual self, and that we should be anxious to secure those for others, and should remember that the body is more than raiment, and the whole man more than his physical needs. True self regard and public regard are not, in the long run, opposed, for the individual, by finding his proper place in an ordered society, gains the fuller life which comes of merging self in commonwealth. So far, secularists and Christians can travel together.

But the secularist would concentrate his attention solely upon this present world, and, by ignoring theological sanctions, fancies himself to have discovered an impetus which "supernatural religion" is unable to supply; for, says he, "Secularism works from within, supernatural religion feebly appeals from without." "Secularism proposes to cultivate the splendid provinces of time, leaving theologians to care for the realms of eternity." What, on the other hand, is religion? According to Mr Foote, it is "the knowledge of God, of His will, of our duties towards Him." We have faculties which teach us our "dependence on Him, our prospect of reward and punishment, to be somehow brought about according as we obey or disobey Him" (Newman). With such a religion secularists will have nothing to do, for theirs is a creed "which appeals to no lust after posthumous reward, or dread of posthumous punishment, but to that fraternal feeling which is the vital essence of all true religion and has prompted heroic self-sacrifice in all ages." Human work well done is its own reward. And if there be a future life, such work must be the best preparation for it (Foote, *Gospel of Secularism, Religious Systems*, Sonnenschein).

The same writer, himself an atheist, contends that secularism does not necessarily deny, but only ignores God and the future life. Many secularists are atheists; more, agnostics. Many, although they reject the "supernatural," profess to be the followers of Jesus Christ, whose image, along with others, adorns the Leicester Secularist Hall. Although secularists, like other folk, often become bigoted and narrow, the

movement does, on the whole, stand for freedom of discussion. The *Clarion* opens its columns to its religious opponents, and a present bishop and a present archdeacon have been among the clergy of the Guild of St Matthew who have appeared as defenders of the Faith on secularist platforms. It should also be remembered that the Guild of St Matthew, whilst it carried on a vigorous intellectual campaign against Bradlaugh, was equally vigorous in championing him against the persecutions of those who would have excluded him from the House of Commons and denied him a hearing.

Although "Bible Impossibilities," or some such subject, is usually chosen at secularists' meetings, the programme of a well-known "Hall of Science" has of late years included such subjects as "The Republics of Plato and of Christ," "Miracles," "Secular Education," "Political Economy," "Positivism," "Manners," "Co-partnership." Among the lecturers are Mr M'Cabe (late Father Anthony of the Franciscans), Mr G. W. Foote (editor of the *Freethinker*), Mr Sullivan, Mr F. C. Gould, and Mr J. M. Robertson, M.P.

Mr M'Cabe is their ablest advocate. He urges that London has morally improved while its church-going has enormously decreased. Japan is mainly secularist, and its morals are excellent. Paris is less criminal and less religious than formerly.¹ France becomes more and more secularist, and its character rapidly benefits. Theological fiction depicts the harrowing deaths of shrieking secularists, but secularists die calmly after leading a "tolerably good life" without

¹ These statements are, of course, disputed.

any theological influence. They are "just easy-going citizens of average decency, keeping up a fair standard of character" (M'Cabe debate, "Independence of Ethics").

And, indeed, when we realise that the early secularists were not men who renounced the good God in order to lead a bad life, but men who renounced the bad God (of Calvinism, etc.) in order to lead a good life, we are not disposed to question Mr M'Cabe's contention. Besides, our religion would lead us to expect that the light that lighteth every man would inspire with partial good, movements even of negation and revolt.

The secularist propaganda is not necessarily without the inspiration of God because its members choose to consider themselves godless. On the other hand, good constructive work is not built on mere denials, and we should not be surprised if "secularism" already begins to show signs of decay. Now, this is precisely what is happening.

In many respects the times are favourable to the propaganda. Mild doubts are the fashion and undogmatism the prevailing dogma. The unscrupulous criticisms of Mr J. M. Robertson and the scrupulous criticisms of Mr Joseph M'Cabe are widely read. The publications of the Rationalist Press have a large sale. Even the inverted Calvinism of my friend Mr Robert Blatchford secures a hearing. The secularist propaganda flourishes mightily, but the secularist societies for all this are beginning to leak. The *Rationalist Press Annual* for 1908 warns its readers that no movement can be permanently based on mere negation.

Secularist audiences are weary of the "Mistakes of Moses," and tire of the everlasting ridicule of a theology which is passing away as rapidly as it sprang up. They had renounced theology that there might be the more time to build a righteous republic here and now, and feel themselves cheated by lecturers who dwell upon the blunders of a God whose existence they deny, and the brutalities and blisses of a future life that they had resolved to ignore. Many are becoming converts to Socialism, and grow restive under the dead hand of middle-aged leaders whom negation has made too old at forty. Mr Gould resigns his secretaryship, not because he ceases to be a secularist but because he becomes too much of a secularist for the secularist societies, and finds that the more enthusiastic secular work is being done outside the dismal Halls of Science. Few young men join, and the old men grow querulous. Mr George Bernard Shaw, that prince of freethinkers, begins to think too freely for the *Freethinker*, which is more enraged at his theistic conclusions than the *Church Times* is at his impertinent methods of expressing them. The leaders are in half a mind to give up reasoning, if reasoning is to lead men back to the Faith. Propagandists are deserting the destructive pseudo-secularism of their societies for the constructive secularism of the Social Democratic Party and the Church Socialist League. Many of them are working shoulder to shoulder with Churchmen for the building of God's Kingdom and the realisation of His will here on this earth. The propaganda was merely the negation of a negation, and is proving itself too

slow-footed to keep pace with the development within the Church.

Of what use any longer are Mr Foote's ponderous contrasts between fraternal secularism and anti-fraternal next-worldliness? He should be contrasting his creed with the creed of those who, while working for the good of the race, regard it not as "the trouble of ants in a million of suns," but as a God-penetrated race of divine and enduring beings, influencing one another for good or evil through this life and through all stages of the life to come. Men will put more heart into the building of castles on the rock than castles in the sand to be obliterated by the tide. A sad and paralysing pity for the creatures of an hour is the motive power of the secularist, and pity is but poor foundation for an enduring ethic.

The secularist propaganda is dying. What further proof is needed than may be found in the defences of its leaders? For to say of a little flock who should be the salt of the earth, a minority in revolt, a band of young heroes, attracting to its standard the most vital and adventurous spirits of the age—to plead average decency and tolerably good living for such a minority is to admit defeat. Such pleas are for elephantine majorities, tamed and domesticated by time. Minorities, leading a "tolerably good life," if they were ever to become majorities, would be leading an intolerably bad life. But there is no spring and no enthusiasm in minorities of "average decency." They will never become majorities. They die and are buried, and for them there is no resurrection on the third day.

THEOSOPHIC DOGMAS FOR ESCAPED ETHICISTS

Theosophic undenominationalism—To dogmatise or not to dogmatise?—
Wherein lies the essence of a religion?—Buddhism versus the
Christian Religion—Mrs Besant and Dr Pusey—Was Madame
Blavatsky a charlatan?—Mrs Besant's rival—Point Loma—The
benefits of theosophy—Lettuces not lotuses.

THEOSOPHIC DOGMAS FOR ESCAPED ETHICISTS

NOT the profession of a common belief, but a common search, is the bond of union between members of the Theosophical Society. So the "basis" informs us, and Mrs Besant has often told us that the Society would admit agnostics, and held no dogmas. Officially it describes itself as composed of students belonging to any religion or none. Christians, Mohammedans, Jews, Buddhists, are urged to remain in their respective communions, and by joining the theosophists to become more, not less, loyal to their respective creeds. A theosophic friend writes suggesting that I should make a great point of this creedlessness. So far as denial of creed concerns the society, it is sufficiently extraordinary, for I know of no single member who does not believe a whole body of Oriental dogmas, and who does not associate this belief with membership; nor does the denial seem to tally with the following official statement:—

"The Theosophical Society is an international body which was founded on 17th November 1875. Its objects are:—

"First.—To form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour.

"Second. — To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy, and science.

"Third.—To investigate the unexplained laws of nature, and the powers latent in man."

A declaration of sympathy with the above objects is required as a condition of membership, but such a declaration obviously involves belief in the dogma of Brotherhood, the dogma of Unity, the dogma of a Universal Order—three dogmas at the least ; and the student would not have attended half a dozen meetings without discovering that these were only certain articles of a creed far longer and more elaborate than the Athanasian, a creed as intellectual as the other so-called creed but without its damnatory clauses.

The theosophist would seem at one and the same time to regard the fear of creeds as the beginning of wisdom, and to hold an intricate faith to which Mrs Besant gives, and other theosophists deny, the name of religion.

Personally, I must confess that both my first and my mature impressions of theosophists suggest that there are few things in heaven and earth that are undreamt of in their philosophy.

In the face of the things I have quoted, and of the direct testimony of one of the officials of the Society, who said it existed to make known and advocate a certain system of philosophy (Henry T. Edge), the denial of dogma is puzzling. Such a denial, when applied, not to the Society, but to that system of theosophy it exists to promulgate, seems to me grotesque. This terror of dogma is characteristic of the Mid-Victorian age, in which the Society was

founded, and into which a large portion of the "imperial race" is only just entering.

In reality the theosophist opposes not dogma, but certain dogmas. He is the product of a moral reaction against the immoral Victorian superstitions which masqueraded as Christianity; against such dogmas as our relationship to a capricious tyrant, everlasting torment, the vileness of human nature, and the viciousness of physical science.

The theosophist, along with many another moral revolutionary, protested against this creed, and was especially revolted by its damnatory appendix. He refused to believe that opposition to vicious propositions spelt future damnation; but, in denying all dogmas and all damnation, instead of specific dogmas and specific damnation, he shows himself an ethical emotionalist rather than a philosopher. The strenuous denial of certain propositions implies certain counter beliefs, assumptions, dogmas, and implies as certainly the damnatory clause, for to believe a generous creed is to be saved, and to deny it is to be damned, *i.e.* shut out from the riches and fruitfulness of the present kingdom of life. There are certain fulgent beliefs which heal and save men, and death-like denials which warp and kill. It is the particular note of the modern decadent to shrink from proclaiming the fact that shrivelled anæmic souls are damned, and the theosophist should be the first to realise that one belief is not as good as another; for, although he holds one man's meat another's poison, yet he believes in a common food of which all should partake, prefacing his creed with the dogma that underlying Faiths

the most varying is one Truth given for the sustenance of the sons of men, and that to accept it is life. What, then, is its rejection?

The dislike of dogma resolves itself, then, into a confused protest against uncharitableness and against creeds imposed by questionable authorities, rigid and inflexible creeds, from which the life and meaning have departed. The Society has, nevertheless, at times come dangerously near to the obvious heresy that one belief is as good as another, and to the absurd predicament of the man in Lewis Carroll's essay, who, when asked which king he would serve, "Richard or William, speak or die?" blurted out "Rilchiam!" This is what Mr Carroll called a portmanteau word. Unkind critics might call theosophy a portmanteau religion.

According to theosophy, the essence of all religions lies in their likenesses and not in their distinctions. This is a most popular belief in our day, and no doubt it is a healthy revolt against Victorian Christianity, which believed itself in possession of the full light and all the rest of the world to lie in darkness.

There are, however, many writers in our time, notably the Abbé Loisy, who, in contradiction to the theosophic idea, would seem to suggest that the essence of the Christian Faith must lie in its points of difference from, and not in its points of agreement with, other religions. But surely the originality of any person does not depend on his being very different from, or very like to, some one else, but rather on a certain energy and individual vitality which he possesses. And this is true of the Christian Faith, or

indeed of any other Faith. For instance, it holds with Hinduism a doctrine of universal brotherhood; it holds against Hinduism a doctrine of the redemption and sweetness of the body and the sensuous life. Theosophy would find in the former doctrine its essence; other schools of thought would point to the latter doctrine for its essence. In point of fact, the Christian religion holds many doctrines in common with other great religions of the world, and some doctrines distinct and peculiar to itself, and both the common and the peculiar are essential notes of its teaching.

Now, although theosophists do not advise converts to abandon their distinctive faiths, and even recommend attachment to some national religion, yet it is in the main true to say that theosophy sets too high a value upon "the same spirit" and too low a value on the "diversities of gifts."

Mrs Besant proclaims herself a convinced evolutionist, but somewhere or other she complains of the arrogance and exclusiveness of the Church's claims, on the ground that Christianity is the youngest of the world religions. Surely it is on account of this very youth and lateness that the Christian Faith, in the development of God's purpose, may be the heir of all the ages?

"I forbid you to speak of your disbelief! I forbid you to lead into your own lost state, souls for whom Christ died!" So Dr Pusey is alleged to have answered the doubts of Mrs Annie Besant, then a young and impressionable girl, whose heart was beginning to revolt against the bibliolatry of the Evangelical

and Puseyite Schools. Had Mrs Besant taken her difficulties to either Newman or Maurice, who, though opposed to each other in many things, had yet each of them a Catholic outlook, instead of applying to a patristic pedant, the whole subsequent course of her life might have been changed.

Wherein lay the attraction of theosophy for Mrs Besant and thousands of modern minds?

Dissatisfied with the popular presentation of Christianity—of its real thought they were sublimely ignorant (Christians either accept the parody of their Faith or reject it: the one thing they refuse to do is to study their own traditions and authorities)—dissatisfied with a religion which opposed science and outraged morals, they turned to “freethought,” which was not free from prejudices nor thoughtful enough to admit the existence of psychological problems or psychic phenomena, and which contemptuously dismissed the instinct for future life and behaved in most unscientific fashion. Suffering from a two-fold disillusionment, these people were on the look-out for a philosophy which would recognise human instinct, reconcile religion and science, and explain the mysteries of existence. Just in the nick of time there appears upon the scene a brilliant cosmopolitan prophetess with her “secret doctrine,” ready to supply this long-felt want.

Madame Blavatsky was no vulgar fraud, but a complex and fascinating figure who, possessing an effective though somewhat shallow knowledge of Oriental thought, was able to popularise it just at the psychological moment among Westerns, who never read their own philosophers and are under the spell

of that great Eastern delusion that action belongs to the West and thought to the East.

On the side of Madame was also the fact that she partly believed in her own creed and entirely believed in herself. It is very difficult to determine to what extent Madame Blavatsky possessed occult or supernatural powers; but, having examined the evidence for and against her, I have been forced to the conclusion that on many occasions she resorted to trickery of the most unblushing character. Devotees never read the case against their idol. It is a point of honour with them; but the infantine faith of Madame's disciples is almost Christian Science-like in its completeness. Mrs Besant, for instance, whose cleverness in certain directions is only paralleled by her credulity in others, on being told by Madame Blavatsky of the charges brought against her, exclaimed that she had only to look into Madame's eyes to know that they were false. Theosophy seemed at one time to be booming as faith-healing is booming to-day, and Madame Blavatsky satisfied the Western craving for authority and excitement by the invention of a body of mahatmas or masters who, from their remote habitation in the desert of Gobi, or the Himalayan hills, had ordered her to reveal sacred truths to a world which was certainly "prepared" to receive them.

There are nowadays members of the Theosophic Society who attach no value to the mahatmic theory, and I am informed by one of them that the President of the British Section is not in agreement with Mrs Besant on this subject. But there can be no doubt that Madame Blavatsky introduced the masters as an

essential part of the theosophic scheme, and that Mrs Besant herself regards their existence as all-important. She would not wish to impose a belief of this sort upon her fellow-members as "of faith," but none the less is herself quite dogmatic upon the point.

The theory of reincarnation is also an all-important one with members of the Society, and I know of no theosophist who does not hold it or believe it to be of considerable importance. Some years ago I had a conversation with Mrs Besant on the subject, and suggested to her that her lectures sometimes gave the impression that she considered it of equal importance to believe that persons were reincarnated upon this earth, as to believe that the state of men after death was not static and fixed, but that there was possibility of progress or retrogression beyond the grave. From her answer I did not gather that she appreciated the difference between the husk and the kernel of such doctrines. She speaks with equal vehemence and emphasis of the letter of the dogmas she believes and of their spirit. And, as theosophy was in part a protest against inert literalism in religion, this attitude of hers will seem unfortunate. To believe in progression beyond death is one thing; to believe that it actually takes place upon this particular planet is another. The first belief is concerned with a question of truth; the second with a question of fact. The first may be true as a fairy-tale is true; the second may be true as Bradshaw's Railway Guide is true. It has always seemed extraordinary to me that Mrs Besant of all people should not exalt Grimm above Bradshaw. I have heard many theosophists emphasise the sup-

posed fact of a curtain ring flying from off its pole and encircling the wrist of a sitter, with the same vehemence with which they would tell us that God is love and that with Him there is no darkness at all. Of course they will deny this and be very angry, or, rather, very "grieved" at the imputation. But it is nevertheless a fact that can be attested by their speeches and their writings.

Many of them have been charged with holding Manichæan beliefs about the body, but Mrs Besant, at least, cannot be criticised adversely upon this point. She would seem to realise the essential value of the physical senses, and to believe not in their suppression but in their control by the spirit. But the study of Oriental literature, and the reverence in which it is held, tends undoubtedly to contempt of the body and the physical senses as mere sheaths which are ultimately to be cast aside as encumbrances. I have found theosophists to take great interest in the subject of spiritual healing, and to hold for the most part much more scientific beliefs on this subject than Christian Scientists. Some of their members have themselves demonstrated the power of the mind to mould the body with considerable success.

The theosophists, unlike the rationalists in almost every particular, have this in common with them, that they do not seem to have contributed anything to what may be called the Science of Morals. I remember with what eagerness one used to listen to theosophic lectures couched in strange and intricate terminology, and invariably discovered that one's mind had been led the wildest wild-goose chase, and that

though the voice was the voice of Blavatsky, the hands were the hands of our next-door neighbour, the local preacher of Salem Chapel. Theosophic ethics are like Cornish pilchards. Both are sent to far-distant countries to receive a hall-mark and to return. They do not improve in the barrel.

It is the insistence of theosophists on the sameness of religion throughout the world, and their too little appreciation of individuality and distinction, that impressed us in the first place and still impresses us. So essential a feature of their religious outlook is it that they apply it in every branch of thought and use it as a talisman of criticism in dealing with the most various subjects. For instance, Mrs Besant joins in the fray that is now raging round the phrase "Jesus or Christ," and, in criticising the views put forward by various writers in the *Hibbert Journal*, adds a suggestion of her own. Thinking from the theosophic standpoint, she believes it likely that a human being called Jesus was for thirty years humbly receptive of truths communicated to Him by a great and universal Teacher; but that, at the descent of the Holy Ghost in the baptism by John, Jesus of Nazareth retired from His body and gave it up to a Heavenly Christ who henceforth used it as the vehicle through which He gave a new revelation to the race. She admits that this theory was ultimately condemned by the Church, but is of opinion that it was orthodox theology until it was condemned. I do not think this view of orthodoxy is at all tenable. But in any case it is this habit of blurring personality, or, as Mrs Besant would perhaps prefer to call it, individuality, which is

significant. The theosophists do not seem to see as, for instance, Mr Edward Carpenter sees, that Nirvana, or the Beatific Vision, does not involve the extinction of individualities, but in some mysterious way involves their completion. The more any individual becomes one with another, the more does he come unto himself; the more boldly and brilliantly does his own individuality emerge. Mr Carpenter somewhere or other records the belief of a lady of his acquaintance as to the final state of the blessed. She was of opinion that perfection would have been reached when we had all become "a happy mass." The lady in question was probably a theosophist.

Theosophists, like spiritualists, think far too much about the next world or the next stage. They are even more open to the charge of sky-piloting than the modern Christian, and, with the exception of Mr Herbert Burrows, I know of no theosophist who is doing much valuable constructive work in the world of affairs. Some years ago I brought some such charge against English theosophists in the *Daily Chronicle*, and received in answer more than one letter from people attached to the leadership of Mrs Katherine Tingley, who repudiates Mrs Besant and gives herself out as the true successor of Madame Blavatsky. The theosophic movement, which was established in the first place to form a nucleus of universal brotherhood, has broken up into many warring sections, the leaders not hesitating to call each other liars and even poisoners. I could write a most extraordinary history of the movement from this point of view, but it would hardly serve a useful pur-

pose. All kinds of societies starting out with the most brotherly motives have split up into warring sections, and the keener their convictions the more numerous the splits. I do not therefore intend to enter into the controversy between the two main opposing theosophic sections,¹ but would point out that, however valuable Mrs Tingley's various social schemes may be, Mrs Besant has not been a mere theoriser. It is not a question as to which of them is the true successor of Madame, for any criticism that I have brought against the one might equally have been brought against the other, and with even greater weight against Madame Blavatsky herself. In point of fact, it is a criticism, not so much of theosophists as of theosophy, which on the whole exercises a paralysing influence on action.

Mrs Besant, in her agnostic and pre-theosophic days, was a constructive Socialist and a vigorous social reformer. Her practical work has to all intents and purposes ceased. In a sense she admits this. She holds that an inch of theory is worth yards of practice; that faith is more important than works. She does not agree with the slipshod saying:

"For warring creeds let angry bigots fight,
He can't be wrong whose life is in the right."

She knows that according to a man's faith so are his works, and that, if only the faith is there, the works must follow as inevitably as a tree puts on its leaves. Why, then, has she suffered paralysis?

¹ Since writing this, Mrs Besant's own section of theosophy has itself been violently subdivided by an unsavoury scandal which it would be out of place to discuss in these pages.

The reason is two-fold. The theosophic faith is intellectual rather than spiritual, and is even intellectually wrong. It is the faith of the superior person and a religious factory for prigs. It tends too much to say, "Blessed are the trained investigators, for they shall see God." Theosophists pride themselves on their calmness, intellectuality, fairness, indifference, want of passion. Their ideal is the schoolmaster. Their Christs are the masters. Their God is the teacher. A letter lies before me from a disciple of theosophy in criticism of a certain lecture I had given on the subject, where I had complained of theosophic superiority, instancing a young theosophist who had told us he was on a Great Wheel, or in an Inner Circle, or on some vantage-ground or other, from which he was able to patronise his fellow-men. He saw no harm in music-halls or in public-houses, but he himself had got beyond such vulgar amusements, and had learnt to call them common, though not unclean. The letter in question is a protest against my having chosen this particular young man as an example, for "it is hardly fair to criticise a whole body of people by the behaviour of some individuals in that body." The writer is intimate with theosophists both in England and in America, and was for two years a member of the largest lodge in America. From the social point of view there was, he says, no such superiority as I had suggested. But he fails altogether to notice that I had suggested no such thing. It was intellectual priggishness of which I had complained; the all too conscious superiority of the young person on the higher plane, or of Mrs Besant, who has definitely

repudiated democracy and holds that no person should be allowed a vote until they have passed a mental examination. The writer himself immediately proceeds unconsciously to prove my point. For he continues: "It is absurd to suppose that a person capable of appreciating Plato, or Marcus Aurelius, or Shakespeare, or Wagner, or Watts the painter, does not feel himself on a decidedly higher plane than he who simply lives the life of an animal." Such people realise that they are on a plane that robs music-halls, soirées, and such-like of their attraction. Emerson said: "A popular novel, a theatre, or a ball-room makes us feel that we are all paupers in the almshouse of this world." The writer further holds that "there is a virtue in pride." He quotes the laws of the universe, gravitation, chemical affinity, etc., to illustrate the way theosophists are attracted towards superior persons with philosophic and scientific minds, for they have "at bottom little use for the vast mass that divide their worship between mammon, emotionalism, and conventionality. Jesus left His parents to associate with the priests of the Temple." The answer to this assertion is that He did not. His public life seems to have been one long attempt to escape from the priests and the superior person generally. Now, this attitude of intellectual contempt and of discovering in intellectual analysis the roots of religion is in itself sufficient to explain the paralysis of theosophy in face of the enormous evils of the present day. The religious prig is complacent and lacks the fire and impetuosity of the Holy Spirit.

Body, intellect, and spirit are the trinity of which

man is composed, but the greatest of these is neither body nor mind, but spirit. Intellectual analysis is important as supplying data for the will and spirit of man to work upon, but it does not itself give the driving force. Beyond all this the theosophic analysis does not seem to be true. It results in the theory, or, to be more accurate, the dogma of reincarnation, and this dogma imposes a further paralysis upon the will. The theory that a person is in precisely the outward conditions for which his previous life on earth is responsible is not a theory which in the long run will make for righteousness. If a poor man is out of a job and starving, not because he is being unjustly treated but because he is being justly treated, contemplation of the fact will not stir you to indignation nor stir him to alter his conditions. It will lead to resignation rather than revolution. I know it is argued that the rich have no right to oppress him, and that it is an excellent exercise on behalf of your own soul to help him ; but, nevertheless, reincarnation has strained the spring of vigorous action and it will not work. Many are the protests of theosophists against this conclusion, but the fact remains that they are not revolutionists. Mrs Besant, so far as she is interested in the social question, is living in the aftermath of her Socialist period. The other day she gave a most penetrating exposition of the evil social conditions of our people, but what was the remedy to be? Democracy had hitherto failed because people will not trust each other. Until the people learnt to rely implicitly in Mr John Burns what chance of progress could there be? Our only hope is that

human nature can be so changed as to induce faith in leaders of the type of Mr Burns. Starving, ignorant men can riot and even make revolution, but only wisdom and love can build up a new civilisation that shall endure. Mrs Besant then dealt with the question of Socialism, and spoke of the interest of the great and misunderstood woman, H. P. Blavatsky, who approved of the attempts that were being made to change the misery of the East End. Not only words but deeds did she indulge in; "for one day, after I had been telling her of some of the piteous sights that I was seeing day by day as a member of the London School Board, as it was then, for the East End of London, I had on the following morning a little characteristic note, in which she enclosed a couple of sovereigns, saying: 'You know I am only a pauper, but give these to the little children who asked you yesterday for a flower.'" Madame had once travelled steerage in order to buy tickets for poor travellers. This certainly shows goodness of heart, although the former instance might be expected from any kindly disposed Tory duchess, and neither of these instances evidence the slightest desire for, or knowledge of, social reconstruction. Mrs Besant quotes with approval H. P. B.'s answer to the question: Are you a Socialist? "I believe in the Socialism that gives; I do not believe in the Socialism that takes." Now, this from Mrs Annie Besant is the merest clap-trap, and proves conclusively how thoroughly theosophy can chloroform the ablest mind.

In Europe theosophists may still have work to do. They may still fulfil a useful function in insisting on

the importance of contemplation in a world of action and bustle which tends to forget it. But one cannot have it both ways. In emphasising contemplation they have depreciated action. In India, in so far as they encourage reverence for the old religions and irreverence for Herbert Spencer, their work is even more admirable. One of the Church papers has attacked Mrs Besant for discouraging a young Hindoo from Christian baptism. The facts seem to be that Mrs Besant found that the young man was leaving his own religion without ever having adequately studied or appreciated it; his soul had acquired a cheap veneer of European culture. He had been Spencerised. She suggested to him that a bad Hindoo does not make a particularly good Christian, and it might be better if he understood and learnt to reverence his own faith before he exchanged it so light-heartedly for another. Mrs Besant has earned the gratitude of all orthodox Christians for very sensible advice, and the consequent hostility of the religious newspapers.

But, for all this, the tendency of theosophy is too much towards a mushy cosmopolitanism and intellectual priggishness. It remains, to a great extent, the religion of the den and the drawing-room. Theosophists are sweet, tolerant, patient, and charitable, but they lack the adventurous spirit, and are not moved with indignation. They come to bring peace, not a sword, and their brand is, I fear, peace at any price. "The wrath to come" is to them an empty phrase. They lead the all too simple life. Their placid philosophy suggests a diet of vegetables. The lotus is their symbol. Should it not rather be the lettuce?

TOLSTOYAN THEORY AND DOUKHOBOR PRACTICE

Doukhobors, English and Russian—Tolstoy and the Church—John the Baptist—The four negative commandments—Tolstoy refuses to dance.

TOLSTOYAN THEORY AND DOUKHOBOR PRACTICE

ONE night, years ago, between the hours of ten and eleven, there arrived at our diminutive flat in Paddington a little band of men and women, who explained that they were Doukhobors and had altogether abandoned the belief in money. As the London hotel-keepers still clung to this belief, they expressed themselves as willing to stay with us for so long a time as we cared to have them. One of the party I had known some years before as a Methodist temperance reformer and a Socialist, and we had become friends; the rest were complete strangers. In return for our hospitality they offered to work for us in any way we liked, from mending electric wires and reading the meter, to moving our furniture and instructing us in the art of living. There was every prospect of their proving interesting, and they looked very tired, so we consented to their remaining. How we all managed to sleep in that three-roomed flat has always been to me a mystery only less baffling than the story told me that night and afterwards expanded by a friendly critic of Tolstoyan beliefs.

There is, or rather was until a few years ago, in one of the eastern counties, a little colony of people who, tired of civilisation, were longing to live the simple life. If they could but support themselves on the land they would be content. From the first their chance of success was endangered by certain "whole hoppers," who would for long periods withdraw from spade work and wander about preaching their gospel from town to town. These literalist interpreters of the Sermon on the Mount eventually insisted on introducing tramps into the colony. No one, whether worker or idler, who wished to join was to be turned away. This led to a dissension, and a young journalist who had saved a little money, wishing to give the extremists a chance, bought another piece of land and handed it over to them to work on strictly communistic principles. They soon got into trouble about their rates and taxes, and the local authorities seem to have been needlessly severe, taking even their implements of labour in payment of the debt. Tramps and ne'er-do-wells imposed on their good nature; and if these English Doukhobors are sometimes criticised for "sponging" on other people, it must be remembered in their favour that they generally took of others' superfluity, while they themselves often gave all that they had. Few of their guests worked, and all had big appetites. On the principle that if any will not work, neither shall he eat, they were compelled at last to modify their communism, and eventually we find the workers pegging out their own plots and by dint of incessant labour just managing to keep the wolf from the door. At this point tramps

who visited the colony were offered the unclaimed and waste land; they might work it or leave it. I believe they invariably left it. Presently, however, the journalist returned, and finding his conditions not observed, demanded back his land. Judge of his amazement when he was told that there was not a single passage in the Gospels that could be cited in favour of legal matters, and therefore they had been obliged to destroy his title-deeds and had not the slightest intention to quit.

Meanwhile, things were going ill with the eastern colony. The moderates had abandoned it to an extremist remnant, who felt it their duty to live together in a big barn and to entertain tramps who gave them smallpox. The magistrates were disgusted, and any slight inclination to purchase the works of Count Tolstoy that may have existed among the local ratepayers now entirely died out.

Although the claim of these English people to the title Doukhobor cannot technically be maintained, for the Doukhobors are a Russian sect up till now exclusively recruited from the peasant class and dating back to the eighteenth century, yet they are curiously like them not only in creed but in physical appearance, and the vicissitudes of their little colonies seem to repeat on a small scale the first experiences of these Russian sectaries when they had come out of their Egypt into Canada, their land of promise. Moreover, the recent decision to drop the term Doukhobor in favour of the comprehensive if somewhat cumbrous title, "Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood," suggests their willingness to

include within their ranks all sympathisers with their opinions.

The original Doukhobors or "spirit-wrestlers" have passed through periods of suppression and toleration, have been cruelly scourged, have worked in chains in dark mines, have shown themselves capable of the heights of heroism and the depths of crime. Their normal life seems to have been neither so criminal as the Russian authorities would have us believe, nor so heroic as it is painted by Tolstoy, but was—according to Mr Aylmer Maud, who knows them as well as anybody in this country—that of worthy folk, who, although ignorant, suspicious, fanatical, and clannish, are "industrious, cleanly, temperate, hospitable, thrifty, honest, and careful of their children."

They form a living Church with a more or less flexible creed, rather than a body of men assenting to a set of unalterable doctrines. The fellowship creates the creed, not the creed the fellowship. Moreover, persecution has led them to conceal their faith. Hence the difficulty of determining their beliefs. The fact of their illiteracy has saved them from bibliolatry, and they allow neither priest, bible, nor state to come between their souls and God. The inward voice in each is paramount—at least in theory. The material world is evil. Our pre-existent souls are fallen and are imprisoned in a world of sense. Our business is to destroy this sensuous universe and, remembering that all men belong to one family, to establish in its stead the Kingdom of God. In theory, again, this kingdom is to be a theocracy, but as in the case of the Dowieites, theocracy in practice

has meant the rule of a despot, to whom are paid divine honours. The Doukhobors have always had these god-men, and it is to them even more than to the inward voice that appeal is actually made. Deprived of their leader, they are as sheep not having a shepherd; their action becomes hesitating; contradictory quarrels and schism are perpetual.

Their leader at the time I write, Peter Verigin, shows extraordinary power, not only in securing obedience when he ruled from a prison thousands of miles away, but by his statesmanlike solution of the deadlock between the settlers and the English Government, and by reconverting the Canadian Doukhobors from private property to communism.

For, curiously enough, just what had happened on a small scale in England had occurred among the Doukhobors in Canada. At first strictly communal, a large proportion of the groups had gradually abandoned this principle in favour of private holdings. Verigin, influenced by Tolstoy, reimposed communism, and now the Canadian experiment might be described as a communistic autocracy.

Although the Doukhobors preceded Tolstoy by many hundreds of years, it is to the Russian prophet¹ that they owe much of their recent intellectual development. At this point, therefore, it will be interesting to turn to Tolstoyanism, with which they have so much in common and which claims millions of disciples throughout the world.

This more than prophet, who casts his word against

¹ As in the case of Mrs Eddy, these paragraphs were written before the death of Count Tolstoy.

the House of Romanoff, is no reed shaken by the wind, but an unyielding exponent of the cause of poverty. They imprison his disciples, but do not imprison him. It may be because they consider the doctrine of non-resistance harmless ; but, if so, why should they lay hands on his followers? He is claimed as the great interpreter of Christ, but the distinctive notes in his gospel are by no means obviously Christian.

Back to Nature, Back to the Land, Back to the Gospels, so run the popular watchwords ; but are they not mutually contradictory? For it is by no means evident that a return to nature involves a return to Gospels written with the express purpose of supplementing nature by grace ; and the land-backers should ponder the fact that the Gospel did not commend itself to the simple-lifers of the country-side but spread like wild-fire among the complex-lifers of the Greek cities. Possibly they were tired of complexities ; but, on the other hand, they were proud of their "life" as citizens and heartily despised the "mere existence" of the villager, and with all this took to the Christian religion as a duck takes to the water. In any case, I think we may safely say that the statement about God making the country and man the town would have puzzled the "citizen of no mean city" exceedingly.

Among the many thousands who are playing with the notions first enunciated by Lot's wife, and used as an effective title at a later date by Mr Edward Bellamy, one meets a few who are not only looking but walking backwards ; they get terribly bruised in the process, banging into civil institutions and bash-

ing the back of their heads against sharp edges of the Catholic Church, but they continue their progression by retrogression undismayed, amid the plaudits of the mob who are looking neither backward nor forward, but only looking on and shouting hoarsely : " At any rate, you are sincere ! "

But no one asks : " Why go back ? " Everyone assumes that Tolstoy is the really consistent Christian, although we can't all of us live so rigidly. But why not ? One hardly ever sees his ideas seriously challenged. He has backed out of civilisation—such civilisation as exists in Russia—and everybody applauds. He mistakes the anarchy known in Russia as administration for the real thing, and anathematises all government ; and everybody says, " How practical and saintly and Christian ! " He dismisses liturgies and ceremonies as " bosh," and everybody says, " How primitive ! " The Church registers his opposition to her principles and traditions by a sentence of excommunication, and everybody says, " How intolerant ! "

It is not easy to understand why Tolstoy should wish to belong to a Church whose history he holds to be an unrelieved record of crime and apostasy. In his *Overthrow of Hell* it is the Devil who arranges the miracles, suggests the Sacrament, and invents the Church. In the *Appeal to the Clergy* he denounces almost every doctrine the Church holds sacred, and, in a recent letter to Sabatier, deliberately rejects it as wholly evil. It is not only corrupt now ; it was never anything else. Yet we are asked to believe that his denunciations of the communion to which he belongs, and which he has consistently fought and hated, show

breadth of outlook, while its retaliation by his expulsion shows bigotry and persecution.

If the Visible Society was from the first so wholly abominable, we fail to understand why Leo Tolstoy should accept the Gospels it gives him and reject those which it has rejected. He would find in the Apocryphal Gospel rejected of the Church much to please him. In fact, the Apocryphal Christ agrees more closely with the Tolstoyan Christ than does the Messiah of the Synoptics. I would advise Count Tolstoy to throw over our Gospels as tainted with the authorship and approval of the Church, and to base his new religion upon the rejected Christian writings. The censor's blacking-brush would not then be so necessary.

Tolstoy knows little or nothing of modern criticism, and despises both ancient and modern commentaries. He has altogether failed to understand that the Gospels are themselves but human commentaries on the life of Jesus—compilations made from the notes not of the reporters of Christ, but of the reporters of His reporters.

For at least two hundred years the Christian Church had no Christian Bible, but its own members during that period were making one. The sacred writings now known as the canon of Holy Scripture are an afterthought of the Christian Church. They are commentaries by Churchmen on the life of Jesus. It is therefore to Church tradition that we should turn when in doubt about the interpretation of individual passages. Such a course destroys the Tolstoyan position. Tolstoy has yet to explain on what grounds

he rejects the Church and bases his whole teaching on the Church's official literature.

It is puzzling to find a man of Tolstoy's intellectual grasp seemingly unaware of the theory of religious evolution. This could hardly have been possible in any country but Russia, where intellectual activity apparently works so wholly outside the pale of the Church. Count Tolstoy notices that civilisation is different from savagery, the mass from the meal in the upper chamber, the Catholic religion from the Gospel, and in that they are different the latter phases are self-condemned. It may be so, but why assume it? Is the oak self-condemned because it differs from the acorn?

Leo Tolstoy is a convert, a leader of great force and integrity, a realist within certain narrow limits, but he is neither a Christian apostle nor a Christian philosopher. A man who has never faced the theory of Catholic development, the most suggestive hypothesis of modern theology, can hardly be taken seriously as theologian or philosopher. Tolstoy is a parochial casuist.

People used sneeringly to say he does not practise what he preaches. They can hardly say that now. Tolstoy owes his enormous power—a power that reaches to the ends of the earth—to intense earnestness and fulgent convictions. He reminds one of Ibsen's "Brand." It is "all or nothing" with him. Opposition on the score of insincerity is dumb before such writings as his. It is only the very stupid-minded or evil-hearted who will deride his attempts to lead the life of a peasant in the luxurious house he has made over to his wife.

Men can never get right with God until they get right with one another. The shirkers feast while the workers starve. Some men are overworked and underfed to produce food and house and raiment for idlers and gluttons. Justice is the basis of the Christian religion. Set your foundations in order. So far Leo Tolstoy's creed has at least the implicit support of the Gospels. People should learn to get their own living, and cease picking the pockets of the poor. Many physical diseases and mental maladies come upon a society which has forsaken justice. Games and gymnastics are no true substitute for manual labour.

But up to this point he has no quarrel with Catholic tradition as expressed in patristic authorities or the work of the earlier schoolmen, or even in so modern and local a form as our English Church Catechism. He does not seem to realise this, for he has no knowledge of the living traditions of the Christian faith. He now proceeds to spoil his faith by battling, not against class luxuries wrung from hungry workers, but against luxury itself. He denounces the "Life of the Senses." He confuses sensuousness with sensuality. The virtue of magnificence is for him a vice. Marriage is the fallen life. Procreation of children is disgusting. Patriotism is crime. He wars not against the sinful lusts of the flesh, but is intolerant of all bodily desires. The censorial brush is used freely. Cana of Galilee must go, not in obedience to any law of textual criticism, but because miracles are silly, alcohol poisonous, and marriage filthy. On the same principle, he should have

substituted the word "spirit" for "flesh" in the sentence "they twain shall be one flesh." He is sorely puzzled by Christ's use of wine in the Blessed Sacrament, for he hates the Sacrament and fermented liquor. So down sweeps the censorial brush again. The Devil invented the Sacrament and slipped it cunningly into the sacred text.

To a great extent Tolstoy's gospel is based on a four-fold commandment. His constant reiteration of love as fulfiller of law is weakened and vitiated by these "thou-shalt-nots": (1) Thou shalt not drink fermented liquor. (2) Thou shalt not love thy country above others. (3) Thou shalt not harbour bodily desires. (4) Thou shalt not physically resist thy neighbour. Let us examine these negative rules in some detail.

(1) Thou shalt not drink fermented liquor. Were one disposed to doubt the possibility of turning water into wine at the marriage feast, it is obviously not the exaggeration of something done by an anti-marriage, anti-feasting, anti-alcoholic Teacher. The action is recorded as illustrative of a joyous Son of Man. The disciples of the austere John become disciples of the gracious Jesus, who immediately takes them (possibly on the Sabbath Day) to a wedding carouse, with its feasting and dancing and fun, and when the guests were merry with wine (the Greek is unmistakable), He supplies them, not with aerated water, but with better wine. Both St Matthew and St Luke paint the same kind of picture, insisting on Christ's own contrast between Himself and John. The Son of Man piped and they would not dance,

the Baptist wailed and they would not weep. Has Leo Tolstoy piped or wailed to his generation? Does he complain, like John, because they refuse to weep, or like Jesus because they refuse to dance? Does he come eating meat and drinking wine, or, like John, neither eating nor drinking? Christ's anti-asceticism is indisputable, if asceticism be taken in the popular, Manichæan sense, and not in the Pauline sense of athletic training and fitness. Could the particular accusation of gluttony and drunkenness be brought against an ascetic who took no pleasure in food and had never tasted wine? Note the emphasis laid by the Evangelist upon Christ's social meals with disreputables, His choice of wine for the Sacrament, and His expectation of a happy state of society in which one would drink wine with one's friends.

(2) Thou shalt not love thy country above all others. Tolstoy in his protest against jingoism falls into an exaggerated cosmopolitanism, denying the value of particular friendships, of national ties, of family bonds. He tries to arrive at universal love by ignoring particular affections. Love for all men and the inter-communion of nations is undoubtedly an essential of the Gospel of Christ; exclusive love of one's own people, involving contempt and ostracism of others, is undoubtedly condemned. But a careful study of the Gospels and of Christian tradition will suggest that our religion is not so much cosmopolitan as international. Now internationalism implies there being particular nations to internationalise, and must therefore be contrasted with the narrow and jealous local pride of the jingo, as also with the vague and hazy

affection for abstract humanity, which is the mark of a cosmopolitan. Whoso loves not Russia whom he hath seen, how shall he love the universe whom he hath not seen? Leo Tolstoy interprets Christ's anti-jingo utterances as anti-nationalist, but Our Lord's very vehemence against exclusiveness seems to be rooted in a passionate love of His own people, and in intense shame that their patriotism should be degraded into a bastard patriotism, which confines neighbourliness to people of the same blood and indulges itself in every kind of petty and ungenerous refusal. His burning love for mankind was not inconsistent with an intimate personal friendship, a preference for the family at Bethany, peculiar intimacies with certain followers, and instinctive turning to his own countrymen. One comes no nearer to universal love by starving more local affections. The Sacramental teaching of the Church develops this Gospel seed of truth. For instance, the Real Presence of God focused in the Bread and Wine of the Mass, bears witness to His universal presence in men and things, and reveals the sacred mystery of the common meal. Through the particular to the universal would seem the more excellent way, nor will the particular affections ever be vaguely merged in a larger love; for as we lose ourselves in that colossal love, we find both ourselves and our friends, and the more local and particular affections, are given greater vitality. Peculiar devotion to nation or individual would seem to be a permanent facet of a brilliant and complex life.

(3) Thou shalt not harbour physical desire.

Tolstoy asserts boldly that the procreation of children is evil and that guilt attaches to the institution of marriage. He alleges that Jesus taught the vileness of physical feeling and of its gratification. This allegation is based on one or two isolated passages of Scripture which have given rise to a vast amount of controversy.

Everyone who looketh on a woman for lust, etc. (Matt. v. 28). But here the saying is contrasted with the old command about adultery. What, then, infringed the ancient law? One thing only, *i.e.* living with another man's wife without his consent, for she was his property along with his oxen and slaves. Any number of concubines was allowed. Tiring of your wife, and lusting after other women, you might procure a divorce on any pretext. The explicit pronouncement of Christ on this point is that such a law is abominable. The looking at another woman for lust is disloyalty to the wife. Woman is not any longer to be a mere chattel. She has her rights and her dignity. The original form of this saying may be as recorded in St Mark. The pronouncement according to this account was made in Judæa in answer to the Pharisees, probably on the very spot where John the Baptist's career had come to an end through his denunciation of the illicit union of Herod and Herodias.¹

How Tolstoy produces from this incident and the Sermon on the Mount a condemnation of all physical desire passes comprehension. St Luke adds that the disciples felt that if marriage was to be strictly observed, it might be wiser not to marry; and

¹ Burkitt, *Transmission of the Gospels*.

Christ replies that His teaching on marriage is only for those who are able to bear it, and there are some who have remained celibate for the Kingdom's sake. He may mean either that celibacy or the bonds of strict matrimony are for those who are able to bear it; but it is quite clear that He was not exalting celibacy above matrimony in a normal and settled state of society. We must remember that they were expecting the imminent and turbulent ending of an epoch, and the ushering in of the Kingdom within the lifetime of some of themselves. A counsel of celibacy in time of stress and persecution is easily understood, for in face of terrible risks it may be wiser for the soldier to remain unencumbered by family ties, nor has he any right to drag others into danger. But it must be remembered that the Gospels are very carefully selected and concentrated accounts of Christ's teaching, and it is therefore all the more significant that their writers hasten to record an incident which proves that He is not condemning marriage nor procreation, for we are told that some of His followers, who may have misinterpreted Him in just this Tolstoyan sense, were preventing little children from being brought to Him by their mothers for blessing. If marriage was an iniquity the offspring of marriage should surely not be blessed. "When Jesus saw it He was much displeased, and said 'Suffer the little children to come unto Me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.'"

There is, so far as I know, only one other passage which would bear upon this subject. The Sadducees who denied the Resurrection found themselves in

opposition to a newer school of thought led by the Pharisees. Neither of these schools believed in the modern Christian's somewhat hazy heaven, nor is there anything in Christ's immediate teaching to suggest modern conceptions of the life beyond the grave. I do not contend that He denied that life. The Church's ideas about future existence are implicit in the Gospels; but He seemed with the Pharisees to point men more immediately to this earth as the arena of the life that now is and the life that is to come, and by the life of the world to come to be more immediately referring to the new epoch that was to be ushered in upon this earth. The current belief was that the drowsing dead would, in the coming of the new epoch, be raised in their bodies to share in the new life of the Golden Age. The Sadducees, who considered such teaching an unnecessary innovation, brought the following objection from the Mosaic Law. According to Moses, a man was compelled to marry his deceased brother's wife if there had been no children. But supposing seven brothers had married her in succession, whose wife would she be in the Golden Age when they were all raised to life again? This was a very common controversy of the schools, and the Pharisee generally answered by assigning the woman to the first of the husbands. Jesus rebukes the questioners, for they neither understood the spirit of the old writings, nor God's power; for in the Golden Age there would be neither marrying nor *giving in marriage*. The latter part of the sentence refers, of course, to the habit of the parent or other guardian determining whom the child should marry without

any choice on her own part. They would be as the angels. The scribes or the Pharisees, according to St Luke's account, approved this answer. The passage is very obscure, and can neither be used in a pro-ascetic or pro-sensuous direction, for the meaning of "as the angels" is lost. It must be remembered that Christ's contemporaries did not consider the angels as sexless, and the Old Testament contains a story of the union of angels and women. There seems to be a peculiar irony in the fact that the Church which Tolstoy rejects has, in the main and up to the present, rejected the sensuous interpretation put upon this passage by the very communities most in agreement with Tolstoy; for many communistic bodies have practised free-love in supposed obedience to the dictates of this very passage.¹

(4) Thou shalt not physically resist thy neighbour. Jesus found a world of individuals quick to resent personal affronts and the nations at each other's throats. He revealed to men the inner constitution of the world, namely, that they were all one family with one Father in Heaven. He does not counsel no resistance of personal and national injuries *by violence*, but no resistance *of that kind of injury* at all, either by sword or tongue or pen. The passage has no reference to resistance in general nor to the methods of resistance. If He forbade all resistance of any evil, then Tolstoy's writings are as much out of Court as the bullet, the ballot-box, and the bayonet. That he is not referring here to anything but national squabbles

¹ Or, it may mean that in the Golden Age woman would have her freedom to choose.

and petty personalities is clear from innumerable traditional interpretations. The violent scourging mentioned in the Fourth Gospel probably included brokers and drovers as well as cattle ; but, in any case, all four Gospels record His physical violence on this occasion. To knock the beer-jug out of a drunkard's hands is to physically resist him. To overturn the tables of the money-changers and drive them out of the Temple is physically to resist them. Renan suggests that Jesus was harassed and lost His temper—a suggestion worthy of the charming author of the French romance.

In point of fact, the placid Buddha Christ is a figment of the Tolstoyan imagination. Passionately in sympathy with the poor, patient in face of personal affront, this Comrade of mankind and gentle Playmate of children, who urges a generosity which will forget and forgive, thunders against the enemies of His Kingdom, prophesies its advent which will scatter men as dust, threatens the weeping and gnashing of teeth, curses hypocrites, approves the violent storming of the portals of heaven. The Tolstoyan Christ would not have pronounced woe to Capernaum, would not have cursed the fig-tree, would not have ostracised the enemies of His Church, would not have denounced His contemporaries as serpents, whited sepulchres, worse than harlots. The Tolstoyan Christ would not have called His king "that fox," would not have called a stupid disciple Satan, would not have said that it would be more tolerable for Sodom in the Day of Judgment than for those cities which refused to harbour His followers. The Tolstoyan

Christ is mild, the Gospel Christ is angry. His denunciations are so fierce that His friends come to think Him a bigoted extremist and His foes are goaded to madness. If text is to be hurled against text: "He that has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one," must be paralleled with "Resist not evil." But, of course, the isolated text tells us nothing. Whatever be the true interpretation of "Those who take the sword shall perish by the sword," the Gospel picture is most certainly not the modern portrait of the well-behaved stained-glass saint of Count Tolstoy's imagination.

Here in the Gospels is One who, in His own person, reconciles fury and love. He is no peace at any price Buddha, but One who shakes empires, removes mountains, scatters the proud, fills the hungry, and sends the rich empty away. He comes to cast fire upon the earth, and longs to see it blazing. He is come not to send peace but a sword, yet warns men that those who have no ideal beyond the sword shall perish with the sword. He comes to break up family life with His keen-edged and terrible Gospel, so that the father will be set against the son and the daughter against her mother. His kingdom is not of this world, with its mean ideals and money-grubbing standards. The revolution had first to work in men's hearts and men's minds before it could find use for swords. But it is only those who know something of the peace and fellowship of the happy warrior who can understand the fierce fury of the Prince of Peace.

One feels that Tolstoy has sometimes substituted for the positive command, "Love one another," the

negative command, "Do not knock one another about." The doctrine of love will drive you in nine cases out of ten to the outward course of not resisting your neighbour. In the tenth it will drive you with equal force to the outward course of knocking him down. Must one obey the letter of the law? If so, by what right do Tolstoyans oppose their neighbours by argument or resist them by threatening moral consequences for their wrong-doings? Once I asked a meeting of Tolstoyans to picture to themselves some evil man, blind and deaf, rushing headlong to a precipice. Would you fling yourself in his way and hurl him back? For resistance here is equivalent to saving your enemy, and murder would be the uglier name for non-resistance. "Leave him alone!" shouted the logical Tolstoyan, but the others, thank heaven, were as illogical as the Count himself, who does not carry his literalism to such lengths. Yet sometimes he writes as though one must not physically prevent the torture of children or animals. He argues his theory with the terrifying logic of the insane. In the interests of universal abstract humanity many people have been driven to cruelty and crime.

A comparison between Count Tolstoy and St Francis would be illuminating. The Count conceives holy poverty to be his duty; St Francis found it his delight. The Italian is pleased to be unencumbered by possessions and to live in the sun. He caught the sunny spirit of Galilee. Tolstoy is dark and dutiful. It would be the Italian and not the Russian who would know the meaning of Whitman's saying: "I give nothing as duties. What others give as duties

I give as living impulses. Shall I give the heart's action as a duty?"

We are driven to the conclusion that Count Leo Tolstoy is one of John's disciples. Right loyally has he followed the Baptist. When John has mourned, Tolstoy has wept. When Christ has piped to him he has not danced. Dancing is a vice of which he disapproves. Somewhere he says of dancing—it is a "silly wriggling and twisting of the limbs."

And yet modern Europe is dark enough, and modern Russia its darkest spot; and if Tolstoy has lost the road, few if any of us have found it, and none of us can afford to despise the courage and sincerity of the old leader who has written: "My heart is breaking with despair because we have all lost the road; and while I struggle with all my strength to find it and keep in it, you, instead of pitying me when I go astray, cry triumphantly, 'See! He is in the swamp with us!'"

THE RELIGION OF THE SPIRITISTS

An encounter—A poor type of religion—The secondary importance of phenomena—Unorthodox orthodoxy—Spiritism a protest—Inception and growth of the movement—The value of Sir Oliver Lodge and of Mr Davey—Spiritism and fraud—Its relation to Broad Churchism — Commonplace and unconvincing morality — The virtues of spiritism.

THE RELIGION OF THE SPIRITISTS

"I AM astonished to find myself shaking hands with you!" The speaker was a short man with a strong face and particularly piercing eyes. He had been introduced to me in a North Lancashire tavern after considerable persuasion. Some years ago he had read an article of mine on spiritualism which had appeared in some London paper, and had been enraged by what he considered the unfairness of its criticism. The article in question, so far as I can remember it, contained a plea for "not proven" as regards spiritist phenomena. This annoyed my friend, but would hardly account for his extraordinary resentment. I had suggested that the phenomena of spiritualism were, after all, of comparative unimportance; that it was the religion sought to be established by means of the phenomena which was worthy of serious attention; that this religion claimed to be such a revelation of goodness and of wisdom, made from the spirit world, as could not be arrived at upon this earth without trans-mediumship and spirit communication. I had further, so far as I remember, quoted from addresses alleged to have been given under spirit control, addresses

which were regarded by spiritualists as containing a gospel far beyond anything this earth could produce, and had come to the conclusion that the religious information they contained, although far above the gospel of popular Calvinism, was far below the gospel of such men as Maurice or Tyrell or Stuart Headlam. The spiritist claim, therefore, to a special revelation was not more proven than their supernormal phenomena. This was the contention that had stirred my now friendly critic to angry contempt.

And although I shall have something to say about spiritist phenomena, it is with the religion of spiritualists that this chapter will chiefly deal, for it is the ultimate beliefs of people, rather than the method by which they have come to them, that chiefly concern us in a work on "Byways of Belief." For what, after all, had happened to my North Lancashire critic? Whether one believed or disbelieved the alleged evidences of spiritualism, did not so much concern him. I had challenged his faith, but his faith had challenged his former life and had brought him out of darkness into light. That is how he put it. He had been leading a life sometimes positively evil and always meagre and purposeless. He had been brought up in what his father and mother were pleased to call Christian orthodoxy; had been educated to believe in a wrathful, mutable, vindictive God; in the never-ending tortures of hell to be applied to those who could not or would not believe; in the resurrection of the carcass; that man immediately after death is either a perfect saint, fit for the companionship of God

and His angels, or a perfect devil, fit for everlasting companionship with the Devil and his demons ; that saints and sinners are to be equally rewarded or punished, regardless of good deeds springing from a kindly heart or the magnitude and number of their crimes ; that every word of the Bible is infallible, and that to perceive its numerous contradictions is to be damned ; that a man must blindly accept and must stifle the dictates of his reason ; that bodily death was introduced in consequence of a man having eaten an apple in disobedience to a command ; that a man can avoid the just punishment of his sins simply by believing that his sins were imputed to Christ, and that Christ's goodness is imputed to him by the Juggler of the Heavens. He had escaped from all these things, and from the lethargy which had followed upon his revolt against such a religion and his inability to build a belief for himself, and the deliverance had come through the teachings of the spiritualists and certain personal experiences, which he is convinced were messages from the spirit world. What wonder that he was furious with me !

The cult, generally called spiritualism in this country is called spiritism on the Continent ; for it is argued that the phrase spiritualism is opposed to materialism, and that, although spiritists are spiritualists in that they accept a spiritualist as against a materialist philosophy of life, they are only a small section of those to whom the larger term should apply. In all ages men have believed in the return of the dead and in the possibility of all kinds of spirit phenomena,

but modern spiritism comes as a protest against that deadness of materialism into which so large a portion of the Protestant peoples of England and America had sunk in the last century. Calvinism in its varied forms had driven them in protest to a materialism which contained within itself no promise of life and little energy. Modern spiritism now appears upon the scene. It is the religion of people who believe themselves to be in communion with the dead through spirit-rappings, trance speeches, and various materialisations. It dates from the year 1848, when Mr and Mrs Fox, and their two daughters, believed themselves to be in communication with a murdered pedlar in Hydeville, New York. The Foxes are subsequently found at Rochester, and are controlled by various spirits. In 1855 the first professional medium visits England, and Keighley in Yorkshire becomes an active centre of spiritist propaganda. Now there are probably considerably over a hundred spiritualist meetings on Sunday in England alone, there are spiritualist halls in more than sixty English towns, and the spiritist movement throughout the world is publishing at least a hundred newspapers.

Now, as to the phenomena of spiritism, it is difficult to understand why so many churchgoers should be contemptuous of stories involving the return of the dead, for their Churchmanship, as described by themselves, consists chiefly in training for the skies and in belief in the continuity of life beyond the grave. Of course, they place their future world a long way off. The popular Christian conception of heaven seems to be that it is beyond the

farthest star, but still one does not understand why they should harbour such an *a priori* objection against the possibility of spirit communication. One sometimes wonders what one's fellow-Christians mean when they monotone their belief in the communion of saints.

But, for all this, after long experience of spiritualist phenomena, I must confess that it has left me unconvinced. We are told by spiritualists of this or that great scientist who has been converted at séances, but one must protest against the growing habit of flinging about big names as arguments. It is thought that because a man is a trained specialist upon a certain subject that his evidence is of altogether extraordinary value on every subject under the sun. Because Sir Oliver Lodge is an authority on radium, the newspaper-reading public eagerly seek after him as a final authority on anything from religion to radishes. The scientific specialist, who fully appreciates the complexity of his own subject, will gaily give his opinions without a doubt as to his capacity in other fields of investigation. And yet, why should it be supposed that Sir William Crookes' belief in spiritualist phenomena is of any great moment when a brilliant conjurer will tell you that, if he attends the performance of a fellow-conjurer, he is often quite unable to detect the methods by which his confrère arrives at his result, and would put them down to magic or spiritualism but that he remembers how easily his own results may so be tabulated?

Some years ago a Mr Davey held a series of experiments in order to gauge the worth of human

testimony to the miraculous. He gave himself out as a medium, and a great number of people attended his séances. He asked each sitter to write down as accurately as possible, and as soon as possible, his or her impressions of what had occurred. Mr Davey was a clever conjurer. The impressions were afterwards collected and published in the quarterly journal of the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*. They go far to show the worthlessness of a considerable percentage of evidence to spiritualist occurrences. Mr Frank Podmore has dealt with the phenomena occurring under the mediumship of Mr Morse. Now, Mr Morse was highly respected in spiritualist circles, and his mediumship has often proved very remarkable. He is supposed to be particularly successful in spirit-rappings, by this method acquainting his sitters with the obituaries of the supposed dead. For instance, on 28th February 1874, a spirit rapped out the name Rosamira, who said she had died in Torquay on 10th January 1874, that she had lived at Kilburn, and that her husband's name was Lancaster, his Christian name being Ben. Now, if you consult the obituary notices of 15th January of the same year in the *Daily Telegraph*, you will find that the rappings have registered accurate information. Thirty-eight of Mr Morse's spirit-rappings show a like accuracy, but the thirty-ninth case is the spirit of a cabdriver who had committed suicide in Marylebone on 21st February 1874. The significant feature of this rapping is that the cabman refused to give his name. Now, in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of the same date, we read that a cabdriver out of employment this morning

threw himself under a steam-roller in Marylebone and was immediately killed. The name is not given, probably because the man was so crushed as to be unrecognisable. In thirty-eight cases, where the name is discoverable from the newspapers, Mr Morse gives it. In the thirty-ninth, where the name is undiscoverable from the newspapers, Mr Morse fails to give it. Hundreds of such cases could be quoted. The spiritualist newspapers are themselves full of warnings against fraudulent mediums, and admit frankly the vast amount of humbug which is being practised. They are perfectly honest and candid about the matter, and are at least anxious to exclude from their pages any but weighty and sufficient evidence. It does not, however, seem to me that they appreciate the value of evidence or possess any adequate criterion of what is or what is not evidential. Not so long ago there was a certain medium named Eldred, in whom the spiritualist papers put their trust. They believed his séances to be beyond suspicion, but his reputation suddenly collapsed, as he was badly discovered in an act of trickery. He had used a chair with a false bottom, under which were hidden his conjuring paraphernalia. A spiritualist paper actually enters a defence. Mr Eldred had satisfactorily explained the occurrence.¹ He had been in a hypnotic state "in which he seemed to have lost his own personality, and while in that state he had done many things which he himself could not explain. . . . He does not know whether the influences from which he appeared to suffer were earthly or extra-terrestrial, but he

¹ *Annals of Psychical Research*, No. 6, 1906.

thinks they were both—he has only very confused recollections of this period. Thus, he remembers very vaguely having bought or ordered the chair, but he does not remember either where or when, nor whether he was alone at the time of doing so. As for the objects found in it, he says he knows nothing about them; it was not he who bought them, or who put them into the chair, he thinks." The same writer quotes some authority as saying that the frauds of mediums arise from an irresistible need to produce a certain state of things, to realise a desire of the soul, and gives the instance of the medium Karin, who, in a séance in which the expected blows were not heard, rose, unable to keep still, and before the eyes of all present struck the floor herself.

This is certainly significant, but can hardly be construed as accounting for the deliberate acts extending over some time, buying of trick apparatus, false beards and conjurers' chairs.

I can well imagine my North Lancashire critic replying to all this that he is sorry for me if evidence which he considers incontestable should have failed to convince, but that, after all, spiritualists are in possession of evidence of a far more valuable character than can be found in alleged materialisations or spirit-rappings. The beating of tambourines, the silly messages often given, may be equivalent to the stuttering attempts of a profoundly clever man to speak a foreign language. The argument of the anti-spiritists that, if ghosts can communicate with us, they would have something better to do than to play musical boxes, something better to say than the

idiotic things rapped out, may not in reality amount to much for the reason just given. But the profound and final evidence brought forward by spiritualists, and regarded by them as all-important, lies in the nature of the gospel vouchsafed to men by the spirits of the departed through trance mediumship or automatic writing. It is with this contention that spiritualism as a religious force must stand or fall. It is alleged that men, under control of certain spirit guides, utter truths which are so far beyond anything that we human beings have as yet conceived, that they amount to a veritable revelation of stupendous importance.

For instance, it has been contended by spiritualists that the spirit teachings of the late Stainton Moses constitute such a revelation. A well-known spiritualist writes in introduction of these teachings: "Nor will I waste time and arguments in demonstrating the absolute and incontestable genuineness of spirit teachings: it is evident to all who read—even cursorily—the book itself. I will say more: I advise anyone who, after having read and duly pondered the volume of spirit teaching, does not come to see that this is a work of sublime genuineness, to renounce for ever the study of historical and literary criticism and exegesis, inasmuch as his profound inaptitude for these studies would then need no further proof." These teachings, published by the London Spiritual Alliance, consist of a long series of messages purposing to express the thoughts of some discarnate spirits on a large variety of intensely interesting and important topics. They are chiefly, according to

Moses himself, the outcome of the influence on him of "one commanding intelligence and of an action on my mind which eventuated in a development of thought amounting to nothing short of spiritual regeneration."

I have examined with minutest care this alleged revelation, and find in the claims put forward for it something that seemed to me infinitely comic, until I began to realise that it was tragedy and not comedy which was involved. For the teachings given are the mere commonplaces of the Broad Church school, the sometimes helpful, but generally crude and shallow, conclusions of a mind but lately liberated from the dungeons of popular Protestantism. For instance, religion, we are told by this commanding intelligence, reveals a loving Father in place of an angry tyrant, does not recognise any need of propitiation, knows nothing of election of a favoured few. "We leave to foolish men groping blindly in the dark their curious quibbles about theological figments." Then follows our duty to God and our duty to our neighbour and to ourselves. The revelation of God is progressive. Yield no obedience to any sectarian dogmas, and so on, and so on. If the commonplaces of modern theology strike upon men's minds as a revelation so transcendent that only spirits could have vouchsafed it, how great is the darkness from which these people must have escaped. The spirits would seem to reflect much of the idle talk of to-day, for Dr Wallace, under spirit control, urges that Christianity should be creedless and swiftly proceeds to expound its "main doctrines." In *Light*, 1892, p. 80, we have an example

of one of the revelations vouchsafed to Mr Moses. On 23rd August 1872, Mr Moses went into his room and found a crown composed on his bed. Recently he had discovered a cross in the same place. "He called us to see it. Dr Steer put paper and pencil by it and locked the door, taking the key. On returning some time afterwards, we found written on the paper that had been left: 'Cross and crown. We are happy,' signed by the same spirits that had written before. That same evening we held a séance, and the medium was controlled to write the following message: 'We made the cross, and we made the crown. We wish to show you that the cross shall precede the crown, and that, in your case, the cross that has been shall be succeeded by the crown that is to be. We are watching and guarding you.'"

This is a fair example of the stupendous gospel of which we should have known nothing had it not been for spirits who have progressed far beyond the scope of our earthly knowledge, and have in these last days vouchsafed the revelation to the sons of men through Mr Moses and Dr Wallace!

And yet, have I not somewhere seen on some religious picture-postcard, or on the walls of Little Bethel, the words "No cross, no crown"?

The upshot of the whole matter is this—that the people who have been attracted to spiritualism, and who have found in its teachings a hope and a refuge, do not include men and women who have been taught a rational Catholic faith. Calvinists and Papists, and a few of the narrower Anglicans, may find in it a revelation; in so far as they do so, we cannot doubt that it

contains a considerable element which is of God. But no one who had been properly grounded in a reasonable theology, with its paramount insistence on constructing a Kingdom of God here on earth, with its proportioned teaching about the next world, its doctrine of the saints and of angels and communion with the dead, its worship of an ever-present though transcendent God, could be in any way struck or impressed by the philosophy of spiritualism, its dreary errors, or its tiring truisms. But for all this, on the side of phenomena, no unbiased critic would think of accounting for it merely by a theory of conscious fraud. Unconscious and semi-conscious fraud plays a much more important part in these experiments. The "sensitive" is usually of the most uncritical type, and mediumship tends to destroy the critical faculty. But fraud, whether conscious or unconscious, does not account for the whole of the evidence. The Psychical Research Society has not proved the existence of spirits, but, if there is any value in scientific evidence, the Society has proved beyond all shadow of doubt the appearances of persons at the moment of their death. These may be spirits, they may be a kind of projected photograph of the dying person, but that they occur in good numbers is now no longer disputable. Spiritualists have done considerable work in building up the evidence, and although the spirit hypothesis does not as yet convince me, I should be far from denying the possibility of its truth or labeling as credulous others who differ from me in the matter. It is easier and much more excusable to denounce as credulity the conclusions of those who

suppose that the spirit communications I have quoted amount in ethical uniqueness to a superhuman revelation. But here, again, one must remember that revelation itself is a comparative matter, and must be glad to recognise that spiritualism has opened a door to many minds, giving them breadth for narrowness, hope in place of despair, and restoring to them their Heavenly Father, who comes to meet them even while they are a long way off.

There is a danger in spiritualism, as in theosophy, that the mind may be turned away from the things of this earth, so that the contemplation of another world or another stage of existence may paralyse action in this world. But it is not always so; for one finds, for instance, in the ranks of the socialists some who are ardent spiritualists, and who translate what they believe is vouchsafed to them from the other world into channels of healthy reconstruction in this.

Although, therefore, spiritualism by no means reaches the high-water mark of current religious achievements, nor the profounder teachings of the mystics and religious heroes and heroines of past ages, nor helps us to a solution of the mysteries of life, it has for many proved a generous and liberating Gospel. To quote Mr Podmore, a none too sympathetic critic: "It has for two generations satisfied the intellectual needs and emotional cravings of hundreds of thousands of votaries. And its followers can at least boast that throughout that period they have shown a sympathy for opinion differing from their own, and a tolerance towards their opponents almost unique in the history of religious sects."

THE WELSH REVIVAL AND AFTER

Sources of information—An impressionist sketch—Wales ancient and modern—The Black Country—The religious background—The Church in Wales—Former revivals—Evan Roberts and his critics—The nature and spread of the revival—Its “vulgarity”—Immediate results—In defence of enthusiasm—Exciting the invalid—Lunacy—Causes of failure—Would institutionalism be wise?—Feminine not feminist—No constructive virility—Employers, tradesmen, and the movement—Its effect on politics—Wanted, another kind of revival.

THE WELSH REVIVAL AND AFTER

DURING the 1904-5 revival in Wales I was asked by an English newspaper to attend the meetings and give some account of them, but it seemed to me more interesting to wait a year or so and then visit Wales with the object of studying results. My first visit was therefore in 1908, and again in 1909 I spent a month or so in the Rhondda, Swansea, and other revival districts, interviewing and often staying with miners, ministers, clergy, publicans, tradesmen—in fact, with all sorts and conditions of revivalists and anti-revivalists. A few weeks of even exceptional intimacy can only result in an impressionist sketch; but, at least, my notes will not be so sketchy as the usual accounts of the revival to which we have been subjected. Perhaps the most interesting of these is from the pen of Mr W. T. Stead, who boasts of having spent a whole week-end in the revival area, and of having gathered his information from *exceptionally* unbiased witnesses, *e.g.* from the revivalists themselves and also from their best friends. The conclusions he draws are naturally favourable, and are expressed in somewhat theatrical phraseology—as, for

instance, when he records that "in South Wales the leading rôle is taken by the third person of the Blessed Trinity." Considering the journalistic booming of the movement, I wonder that Mr Stead did not add that the press notices were altogether favourable. But, in spite of the journalese in which it is written, his account is a good foil to the long and clever but unnecessarily unkind volume by a Welsh convert to Anglicanism.

There is an even longer volume on the revival which is pompous and favourable, but entirely uncritical, and of the making of tracts, pamphlets, and newspaper reports there has been no end.

There is an interesting piece of work called *Mediæval Wales*, in which is quoted a twelfth-century chronicler who describes the Welsh of his day as pastoral and prosperous meat-eaters, living on the produce of their flocks and herds, great fighters, quarrelsome, brave, patriotic, and lovers of liberty. They quickly undertake and as quickly abandon an enterprise. They are not truthful, and enjoy removing their neighbour's landmark. Their generosity is proverbial. They keep open house for all comers. The young women are clever and charming, and excel upon the harp. Jealousy is a vice unknown among them. They are intensely religious, and their Church is happy and at peace.

To some extent the old chronicle still rings true. They are certainly generous, and as certainly argumentative, blending the rational faculty with exceptional emotionalism and possessing the religious sense in high degree.

A critic of the revival has spoken of the sadness of the people. It was a movement based not on the Incarnation and Resurrection, but on the Betrayal and the Cross. "To succeed in Wales you must be sad." Now, I do not think this is true; but if sadness really did predominate, it would not be astonishing considering the prevailing blackness—valleys blackened with coal; ugly little black towns, the work of the jerry-builder nosing swift profits; black rain, sometimes in torrents, sometimes in misty drizzle; and a black-habited people. For instance, I had spent the night in Porth, and after breakfast next morning went to the post office to call for letters, and passed perhaps a hundred men wearing black coats and black bowler hats, standing silent, staring at nothing, waiting for something to happen. Three hours later I walked through the same street, and was again confronted with these dark and motionless images. Is it that they have nowhere to go? But if one has been down the pits for eight hours, one is too tired for a mountain climb and too cramped to do anything but be out in the open, in such light as late autumn in a Welsh mining-town affords. There are, of course, the public-houses, for the most part dark and uncomfortable, and at night there is a dingy third-rate music-hall with a dingy third-rate show. But, by rule of contrary, these people should want light and laughter.

There are rich men who argue that because the better-paid workers of Great Britain have not learned so well as our German cousins to use their leisure and their money, they should promptly be deprived

of both. The same argument might be turned against the aforesaid rich men. They will, perhaps, seek further justification for their convenient theory in scenes such as I have described. No doubt some people urged that the prisoners of the Bastille, dazed with freedom and stupidly blinking in the sun, should be thrust back into merciful darkness. I fear the plutocratic suggestion will hardly appeal to the Welsh miner.

People soon learn to accustom themselves to slavery. It is more difficult to accustom oneself to liberty. Here and there the public is taking things into its own hands. Evening classes and social clubs are springing up, and such efforts as the "New Era" movement in Abertillery and the democratic awakening at Mardy (where the miners are themselves building a public hall, library, and reading-room; their library already contains a splendid selection of 2000 well-used volumes) are beginning to dispel the gloom. Some day the people will shake themselves free from the dust of coal and Calvinism, and the valleys will laugh and sing. Meanwhile, there is the Saturday football match, when hundreds of thousands enjoy an hour or so's forgetfulness and are frantically pleased. They say Welsh football is inseparable from the gambling habit. Perhaps drunkenness and gambling are "the short cuts" out of the coal district.

Modern industrialism has polluted the valley streams and the hillsides, but the mountain tops are still magnificent, and even industrialism has its own infernal beauties. I have seen canals of burning

emerald in Lancashire, and the splendour of the furnaces in the Black Country and in Barrow. No illustrations to *Grimm* or *The Arabian Nights* can compare in a kind of terrible magnificence to the lurid scenery of the lower Tyne near North and South Shields. And here in South Wales I have come across all kinds of magical things, including a burning mountain. The cinders from the pits are thrown up in heaps upon the hillside; the mountain is perpetually aglow, and suddenly a wind will fan the embers into great red flames which flare out in the prevailing blackness. And now, as to the religious background. The terribly logical Calvinism of the past does not seem to be taken very seriously to-day. It has not been supplanted by any consistently constructive theology. Hell has to some extent receded, and a tawdry heaven fills the religious bill. The pulpits are radical and negative, stressing disestablishment and the supposed religious rights of the Welsh people. Not only the shopkeepers but the industrial workers run the chapels. There is even in Wales a landslide from the churches, not into definite atheism—there is very little of this, although there are small and bitter atheist groups at Porth and Tonypany—but into indifferentism. Church and chapel goers were for the most part growing spiritually fat and sleepy. The old Calvinism had lost its grip, and the New Theology had not yet arrived. And what about the Church in Wales, or, as it is too often called, the Church of England in Wales? Its teaching is becoming more constructive and proportioned, but its outlook is hum-

drum and the theology of its pulpits lacks fire and imagination. It was affected, but less affected than the Free Churches by the revival, and it has lost a far less percentage of such converts as it had. Among Churchmen there were neither the same excesses nor relapses as elsewhere. The movement has had a tonic effect upon the Church, the only religious body which is gaining ground with any rapidity. Its adherents, of course, are still in a considerable minority as compared with other denominations taken *en bloc*, but the minority¹ is by no means negligible. Disendowment would be a terribly serious matter for the poverty-stricken parishes of Wales, and the disestablishment problem drives Churchmen into rigid Toryism, and Nonconformists into rigid Radicalism. This eternal problem once solved, we should be able to discover whether the Toryism of the Church is accidental or essential. Protestant Churchmanship is essentially conservative; for, when Protestants favour Church and State, they do so from habit or to distinguish themselves from the disestablished lower orders with their "quaint dissenting notions." But is the High Churchman necessarily a Tory? That all depends. The Anglican movement finds itself at present at the cross-roads. As yet it is Puseyite rather than Maurician. It is inclined to teach with Pusey a caste priesthood, a sacerdotalism "from above." Tractarianism in theology spells Toryism in politics, or would inevit-

¹ *The Daily Chronicle*, November 17, 1910, speaks of 1864 churches as against 4800 chapels, but the number of chapels and seats is immensely out of proportion to the numbers of the worshippers.

ably spell it if Churchmen were logical, which, fortunately, they are not. So long as the Church in Wales is Tractarian, Welsh Nonconformity has nothing to fear. There is, however, a modernist Anglicanism, represented in part in the Church Socialist League, which teaches with Maurice the priesthood of the whole people, focused for sake of "holy order" in official but representative priesthood, as mouthpiece of the Christian democracy. This school of thought, which is growing rapidly in England, possesses a uniform and scientific system of sacraments, creeds, and church government, at all points rational and at all points democratic. The Bishop of Birmingham, halting between these two opinions, has done much to popularise the latter among his fellow-Churchmen. The formation of two or three branches of the Church Socialist League last year, and the popularity of Dr Gore with some of the Welsh clergy, suggests the rise of a democratic Catholicism among the people of South Wales. This cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, may become formidable in the near future. The popularity of the New Theology and its organ, the *Christian Commonwealth*, in the colliery districts is significant when one remembers that Mr Campbell's movement is largely democratic and largely an attack on Protestant individualism. One often wonders how far this movement, anti-Tractarian on the one hand, and anti-Calvinist on the other, may be the precursor of a genuine Catholic democratic reconstruction. For the people of Wales are not naturally anti-Catholic and anti-sensuous, and it would

not much surprise one if even Welsh Nonconformity were to become "ritualistic."

As to the alleged gains of the Church in Wales, how far are the increased numbers to be accounted for by some special urging forward of boys and girls into confirmation and first communion for the purpose of swelling returns? How far is the advance a spiritual gain? To a great extent, apparently, the progress is intensive as well as extensive.

I have said that Nonconformists have little to fear from the rivalry of a Church at present so largely Tractarian and Tory, but there is an even more potent reason for the comparative impotence of the Church in Wales. Patriotism is almost a passion among Welsh people. The Union Jack is nothing to them. The union with England¹ is practically but not sentimentally accepted. The Red Dragon alone stirs them to enthusiasm.

Of course, the suicidal policy of thrusting foreigners into Welsh sees and parishes has been to a great extent abandoned, but the Church in Wales is still largely the Church of England in Wales, English bred and English fed. No characteristically Welsh theologian has been forthcoming.

The ordinary Church Defence lecturer, so far from grasping the value of a national point of view, cries out against altering the *status quo* precisely because the Welsh Church has for him no existence excepting as four dioceses of the English province of Canterbury. The ordinary Church defender will

¹ Cf. Mr Morgan Humphreys on "Welsh Nationality," in a recent number of the *Socialist Review*.

have to be drowned if the Church of Wales is to be saved.

A change of view as regards patriotism and nationality is essential. Here again Puseyism is the enemy. The Tractarians had no vivid sense of diversity in unity as against uniformity, of internationality as against imperialism in ecclesiastical matters. A federal democratic in contradistinction to a monarchical imperialist idea of the Catholic Church is what is now necessary. The policy of a Catholic yet Cymric Eglws under the Archbishopric of St David's would take captive the Welsh imagination. If disestablishment is to throw the Welsh Church into the arms of Canterbury as it has thrown the French Church into the arms of Rome, its last state will be worse than the first. The only salvation lies in the capture of the nation by the ancient Catholic idea of autonomy with interdependence, the true catholicity of federalism versus imperialism. If nationalisms were the children of Christendom, Christendom must find room within a wide and liberal, and yet traditional and historic, unity for grown-up nationalities. There are diversities of national gifts, but the same spirit. One in many and many in one, that is the embryo administrative creed of Christendom. Development must mean reaching back to that earlier half-understood, lightly-valued idea, and reaching forward to the idea grown strong and precious in the experience of centuries of the growth, and welding together, and maturity of the Christian nations. We look forward, then, in the light of our national reformation, to a rejuvenescence of the Catholic Church, rebuilt by

national churches held together by an international faith, an international tradition, and international councils. The question of temporalities, intensely important in its own degree but utterly unimportant compared with this stupendous necessity, is surely not beyond the collective wit of men of goodwill to settle? This dispute about endowments might surely be settled by a compromise, *if only men could once more be brought into an agreement on a few fundamental ideas*; no compromise is possible where men are fundamentally disunited and disagreed. Such essential unity would certainly be a menace to Nonconformity, but the most living elements in modern dissent, both English and Welsh, are positive and Catholic, and have nothing in common with a bitter and negative Protestantism. The most virile thinkers among the Nonconformist churches would themselves welcome a democratic Catholic reformation which would make it possible for them to find place and utterance in the old Church come to life again, and to become practising members of the same.

To this emotional and religious folk, vaguely dissatisfied with existing religious forms, its Calvinism unconsciously modified almost to the vanishing point, to a folk grown sleek and bored and spiritually dry as touchwood came the match which set religion ablaze. Wales is the land of revivals. An emotional wave had swept over the country in 1759, in 1859, and again in 1882. Mr Stead speaks of the revival of 1759 as largely the work of Howell Harris, an Anglican layman who, while taking part in the litany in his parish church, was suddenly filled with the

Spirit, and went forth to preach the Gospel to his fellow-men. The revivalists included ten benefited clergy, and the movement was within the pale of the Church.

Obtuse as ever, the Anglican authorities snubbed instead of directing it, and Nonconformity, originally a Cromwellian exotic, received a tremendous impetus from within the nation, so much so that many regard that year as the birth year of modern Wales. Since then there have been several other religious upheavals, but none of them can compare in intensity with the revival of 1904-5, which originated at New Quay, where, at one of the meetings in February 1904, a young girl, Florrie Evans, stood up and confessed that she loved the Lord Jesus with all her heart. This amazingly simple and facile pronouncement set the whole country-side ablaze. The fires of the Spirit burnt fiercely throughout the subsequent mission, and at Newcastle Emlyn caught up Evan Roberts in their swirl, and from this point that fulgent personality became the central instrument of this last and greatest revival. For years he had been preparing himself for such a moment; he had always been a visionary. Like Luther, he had had physical conflicts with the Devil. He visualises Jesus, lies entranced in ecstasy for six hours. A prophet is not without honour save in his own country, and will often draw back from the magnitude of the task of converting his own people. The following conversation of Evan Roberts with Mr Stead is worth quoting in this connection: "I did not go to my people, but I was troubled and ill at ease. And one Sunday, as I sat

in the chapel, I could not fix my mind upon the service, for always before my eyes I saw, as in a vision, the schoolroom in my own village. And there, sitting in rows before me, I saw my old companions and all the young people, and I saw myself addressing them. I shook my head impatiently, and strove to drive away this vision, but it always came back. And I heard a voice in my inward ear, as plain as anything, saying, 'Go and speak to these people,' and for a long time I would not. But the pressure became greater and greater, and I could hear nothing of the sermon. Then at last I could resist no longer, and I said, 'Well, Lord, if it is Thy will, I will go.' Then instantly the vision vanished, and the whole chapel became filled with light so dazzling that I could faintly see the minister in the pulpit, and between him and me the glory as the light of the sun." For all his popularity Evan Roberts has been the subject of frequent and bitter attacks. It has been said that towards the end of the revival his temper was bad and his egoism colossal. How far the booming of the movement by journalists had affected its central figure it would be impossible to say, but the strain upon the young preacher must have been almost unendurable, and the criticism to which he has been subject appears to be harsh and exaggerated. A critic, for instance, is disgusted because Roberts stopped the prayer of "an aged Christian gentleman, one of the landmarks of the village." Elias, a local Baptist, meets with no better treatment. During his prayer, Roberts calls for verses of a hymn; Elias continues, and Roberts goes into convulsions in the pulpit. We

are told that his strange conduct sounded the death knell of the revival in the Aven valley. At Zoar, in Neath, he broke up a revivalist meeting, asserting that the Spirit of God was not in it; but these stories are capable of a sympathetic interpretation, and their worth should perhaps be judged in the light of the following incident. I was assured at one place by a landowner, himself a Churchman and scornful of the movement, that Roberts had refused to speak to the people at the local chapel until the Devil had been thrust out, and had smashed the windows to facilitate the Satanic exit. People actually present at the meeting told me afterwards that the order for breaking the windows had indeed been given, as they could not be got to open, and the heat was intolerable.

Roberts has been accused of preaching hell and gloom and negation, especially towards the end, but this does not seem to be borne out by the facts. I doubt if it would not be truer criticism to complain of the rather cheap and tawdry heaven thrust forward *ad nauseam*. The revival was the enemy of the smug deacon and official formalists; that Roberts, where these were, scented Satan is by no means to his discredit. And it is remarkable, as showing the extraordinary power of the movement, that it did manage for the time, at least, to convert the religious world to religion. Church members of thirty or forty years' standing would confess that in the past their faith had been a farce; the complacency of church officials was completely broken.

The revival has been described as singing its way

from one end of the land to the other, and song everywhere bid fair to drown the preaching. Sometimes the solo singers would break down under stress of emotion, and the congregation would fill in the gap with impromptu choruses. Mr Stead speaks of impassioned prayer to the accompaniment of a hymn by the singing sisters, rendered in exquisite undertones which reminded him of the orchestra when the prima donna holds the stage. And, on the whole, there was dignity about the music, such dignity as one rarely finds in English missions. True, the "Tell mother I'll be there" type occurs, but it is significant that the most popular of the individualistic Torrey-Alexandrian collection, "The Glory Song," was not a favourite.

The hymns most sung were "All hail the power of Jesu's Name" and Gwilym Hiraethog's revival song, of which I have only this indifferent translation:—

"Here is love like mighty torrents,
Pity like the boundless sea,
The spotless Prince of Life is dying—
Dies to purchase life for me.
Who can ever cease from praising,
Who can ever cease to sing,
Love that cannot be forgotten
While the harps of heaven shall ring?"

Offensively Puritan as was the revival, it cannot be charged against its leaders that they conducted a merely anti-alcohol crusade. It was the appeal to the crucified Saviour, and the awakening of a sense of love and gratitude to His Person that gave to both the reputable and disreputable sinners the power to overcome their particular vices. Everywhere the

revivalist insisted on the merciful God and the boundlessness of His forgiveness. Roberts would sometimes clap his hands like a schoolboy and shout for joy. This fever heat could not be kept going for ever; but let them keep it going as long as they could, they must raise the churches to a higher level, and then they could "settle down to business." It is not a little pathetic that he was convinced at one time that a hundred thousand souls would be won in Wales, and that later he told Mr Stead: "At one time I said I would be satisfied with a hundred thousand converts, and then would be willing to die, but now I want the whole world."

There were places where no leaders of the movement ever went, and yet the revival kindled them to a flame, and the rapidity of its progress was almost miraculous; it was without the usual machinery of this kind of religion; there were no Gospel tents, no posters, no handbills, and no salaries. It was a movement not engineered from the upper classes, but arising from the heart of the Welsh democracy. The plutocracy may incidentally have gained by it, but by what movement of our times do they not stand to gain? As God brings good out of evil, so mammon will always bring evil out of good.

I have often heard people complain of the vulgarity of the revival, and the speech of the people is to a certain type of mind "common and unclean." "Oh, thou clean Spirit," cried one of the miners, "lift up the blinds of his heart, that he may see the Crucified!" "I will not give Thee rest, I will not cease troubling Thy peace, until Thou hast saved him!" This is the

thread from which great literature is woven, and even such colloquialisms as the following are not contemptible: "O Lord, we know that Thou art having a busy time, but do Thou save her!" "I thank Thee for going down the pit after him!" "O God, give us a thorough spring-cleaning!" "We thank Thee for shunting our ministers on to a siding, but do not leave them there too long, or they may rust!" And as to the child who cried, "O Lord, make me as pure as Cadbury's Cocoa!" in happier days, before mammon had polluted the Welsh streams and blackened the Welsh air, a happier simile would have sprung to her lips. The purity she knew was the purity that screams at us from the hoardings.

I am often asked what did the revival accomplish? Have its effects been good or bad? From the Puritan standpoint the immediate effects were good; the persecution of publicans, the indiscriminate attack on well-kept and ill-kept inns, the conversion of footballers from the iniquities of the football field, the burning of coloured jerseys, those last vestiges of colour that remained to offend the Puritan eye in black and pious districts, all these things are satisfactory, given that particular standpoint; but even here it should be noted that drink and sport have swiftly resumed their sway, and, in the words of an old deacon in the Rhondda: "We've had a high time, but I am sorry we have little to distribute in the way of dividend." And, if we judge of results from the Christian rather than the Puritan view-point, the outlook is certainly depressing. What of real temperance, sobriety of life, humility, kindness, and generosity remain? Favourable critics,

themselves revivalists, think that out of every hundred converts ten may remain. Of these ten, how many are merely converts from drunkenness to censoriousness, or what proportion of the ninety lapsed are more harsh and cynical than before, it is impossible to say. Most of the people I interviewed, and they were not hostile critics, doubt if four converts out of every hundred remain. The other day I happened to pick up a book on the subject of begging, which records an actual conversation between professional beggars; one warns the other not to go to Wales, as the revival is over and the people's hearts and pockets closed.

I do not think that morality, in the English and restricted sense of the word, was increased by the revival. I was often told that the illegitimate birth-rate had risen as its direct consequence. To students of psychology the statement will seem credible, for sensualism and revivalism are often found together.

Religious people may quite relevantly ask if the unexpected ever happens in these movements, or if God only meets one along the line of one's own expectancy? The sins recognised by revivalists are principally crude and obvious and disreputable. They expect the drunkard to become a teetotaller, and he becomes one. They are seldom on the alert as regards the subtler forms of pride and pharisaism, and the question that has to be asked from the Christian standpoint is not whether the drunkard has given up the drink, but whether he has so filled the chambers of his soul with humility and kindness and humour and geniality and temperance, that there is no room for the entrance of seven other devils more

deadly than the first. Over and over again I asked if any case had occurred of a plutocrat's conversion from mammon, or a tradesman's conversion from sanding the sugar, or a teetotaler's conversion from uncharitableness to publicans, and the answers were by no means satisfactory. Just now and again one caught a glimpse of some greater and more Catholic conception of life; now and again one heard of kindness to children and the paying of debts, and of heroic self-sacrifices and acts of splendid justice.

And I think that on the whole Evan Roberts' outlook was towards these better things; but the religion of Wales is still so largely individualistic that the emotionalism aroused by revival is to some extent the emotionalism of the unhealthy and introspective. Of course, it is no little thing that a harsh people should be softened, if only for a few months. In the case of more than one mine the colliers gave up cursing and beating the horses, so much so that the beasts became dazed with this good treatment and refused to do anything; but I fear that they are working quite as satisfactorily as ever now.

The emotionalism of revivals is sometimes unconditionally condemned. A couple of centuries back such condemnation was the prevailing fashion; so much so, that the defenders of the Christian faith attempted to prove that Jesus was no enthusiast, but a very calculating and logical person like Dr Paley. The good or ill effects of this rousing of emotion will depend very much on the normal condition of the persons aroused. Mr Stead's naïve remark to the effect that Welsh people "all know the essential

truths" may be disregarded. Introspectively Protestant nations are in a condition of disease, not only in that they fall short of their religious standards, but in the religious standards themselves. To rouse a healthy man from his long slumbers is an excellent work ; to arouse an invalid is a more doubtful policy ; so doubtful, indeed, that it becomes difficult to say whether or no the last state of a nation after revival is worse than the first. Whatever may be the truth about illegitimacy, there is unfortunately no doubt about lunacy. The authorities at the Public Asylums, or any impartial medical man in Wales, can be appealed to on this point.

If the Welsh revival has largely failed—and failure is on all hands admitted—the causes are evident. Some of them I have already suggested. A President of the Welsh Baptist Union reminds us that practically no fresh interests are provided for the new converts who have given up everything that filled their leisure. Public-houses and football fields are being emptied of young men. What are the Churches going to do with them ?

He thinks the question would be answered by the establishment of what is popularly called an Institutional Church, with parlours for young men and parlours for young women, separate class-rooms, lecture-rooms, museums, libraries, and gymnasiums. But at present the people have answered the question in their own way, by a return to the football fields and the public-houses. If this is not a satisfactory answer, would an artificial and patronising "institutionalism" be any more satisfactory ?

And the lack of amusements is not accidental but deliberate. It is the deliberate outcome of a Calvinist Puritanism which belittled the Sacraments, and denied beauty, and exaggerated the vileness of sense. It is questionable, this uncouth attempt to provide the people with pleasure. Had not Welsh religion better set its own house in order? And then, when a lively and proportioned and human faith is common among the people, its spontaneous outcome among them will be all kinds of feasts and merrymaking. Because Calvinists disbelieved in God's valleys and hills, and denied the sacramental values of visible things, the valleys and hillsides have been given over to the Devil, and filth and darkness reign almost unchallenged. A few teetotal clubs will not cleanse the streams nor suppress the jerry-builder.

A doubtful quality of the revival may be discovered in its feminine receptivity. The personality of Roberts was not without grace and fascination, but there was in it nothing virile or challenging. The appeal the revivalists made lacked originality and constructive vigour. "O Lord, bend us!" was his constant cry. The idea of yielding and being broken was prevalent, and the bracing of the will was looked upon with suspicion. As we shall see in a subsequent study,¹ this failure to appreciate man's active co-operation with God is a constant note among the byway religions.

This idea is prevalent also among certain Roman Catholics, one of whom said to me, on the election of the present pontiff: "Thank God! we've got a fool

¹ "Shorter Studies in Credulity."

for a pope at last. The Holy Spirit will no longer be hindered in His operations." This yielding and bending attitude is all to the good if it be the response of a virile nature to a rich and varied Faith, but if it be the response of an already receptive and feminine type to a narrow or ill-proportioned religion, the result will not be satisfactory. Mr Stead glories in the fact that the revival was so largely a woman's movement. "Tell mother I'll be there" suggests to him that "father had to take a back seat." He even conjectured that "as the revival of 1859 to 1861 led to the enfranchisement of the male householder, the present revival may be crowned by the recognition by the State of the full citizenship of women." But I doubt if it was to any appreciable extent the suffragist type of women who led the movement. Had she done so, the charge of effeminacy could hardly be brought against it.

I may be reminded of my earlier admission that Roberts preached a positive love of Jesus rather than a negative "Thou shalt not drink," and this should certainly be counted unto him for righteousness; but the value of the watchword, "Jesus only," depends very much upon the masculine or feminine kind of love to which people are exhorted, and even more on the "Jesus" preached.

Modern evangelists are just as superstitious as were alleged to be certain of the schoolmen, in their mechanical notions of the wonder-working qualities of sacred terms and sacraments.

This criticism does not involve a denial that God's Spirit was at work in the Welsh revival, but does

involve remembrance of the fact that the grace of the Spirit is intermixed with men's imaginings, and circumscribed by the limitations of their hearts and minds.

As to the political results of the revival, Mr Stead makes the interesting assertion that every revival bears political fruit, and instances the Cistercian Mission which was followed by Magna Charta, the Coming of the Friars by the gift of parliamentary government, the Lollard Movement by the Peasant Revolt, and so forth; and it is noticeable that from the ashes of the recent revival there seems to have sprung the Independent Labour Party in the southern valleys.

I am not persuaded that this political phenomenon was directly due to the revival; indirectly it may have been so, for among the men stirred into life by the movement and finding no permanent satisfaction in its message, many turned to this new social gospel, finding in it a livelier satisfaction. Mr Morgan admits this growth of political power among the workers, and, indeed, makes it another cause of complaint against the movement. It must, he says, be "a source of sorrow to God-fearing people that the revival ever came" when we realise that "Socialist organisations since the revival have invaded the valleys and are gathering Welsh working-men by the thousands to the new Socialist gospel." It is significant that the religion of the movement, so largely next-worldly, by its omission of that other essential element of the Christian Faith, the this-worldly element,¹ should have

¹ Cf. "The Catholic Harvest."

resulted, by a kind of fortunate reaction, in the building up of a movement pledged to the realisation of the Kingdom of Heaven and of God's will "as in heaven, so on earth." That the revival should, however indirectly, have resulted in Socialism cannot be a cause of satisfaction to Mr W. T. Stead, who seems to suggest that one of the values of Methodism was that it diverted enthusiasm from revolution to religion. Defending its hysterical elements, he writes: "'Very foolish and absurd,' no doubt sniggered the superior persons of that day. But, if Mr Lecky and other observers may be believed, it was that foolishness of the Methodist revival that saved the children of these superior persons from having their heads sheared off by an outburst of revolutionary frenzy similar to that of the Reign of Terror."¹

No doubt the rich dissenting friends of Mr W. T. Stead do look to next-worldly revivals as a kind of Mother Seigel's Soothing Syrup for the poor, and the converted drapers of Wales were delighted when they found their shops full and the drink shops over the way empty.² "The work-people spend ten shillings in groceries and draperies where they used to spend four," records another happy tradesman during that happy period. A prominent solicitor is paid annually a heavy retaining fee by the licensed victuallers, and, at the bidding of a conscience awakened by the revival, quietly sacrifices it and is now retained by the other side.

There is much disinterested testimony of this

¹ Mr Stead's *Revival in the West*.

² *Life Story of Evan Roberts*.

sort. The people work all the better if they give up excessive drinking, and a few days' religious excitement and disorganisation of labour is not a large price to pay for subsequent docility. Public-houses, at most times doing a flourishing trade, suddenly found themselves on the verge of ruin. How blessed a consequence of religion for those of the middle class who do not happen to hold brewery shares!

There was a particularly significant article in the *Iron and Coal Trades Review*, in which is recorded the remark of an old collier near Pontypridd in regard to feuds between Unionists and non-Unionists at the collieries: "I have seen neighbours refuse to speak to each other; I have known some refuse to descend in the same cage as the men who did not belong to the Federation or speak to them below ground, except with an oath. This revival has stopped all that. . . . Rest assured that what has been done by the Federation will never be done again."

A pious tract on the revival also reminds employers that, "other things being equal, a Christian man can always do the best work in the quickest time." The present labour troubles in South Wales must have been peculiarly unpleasant reading for the Christo-capitalists and their journalistic supporters. Since the riots of last year, consequent upon the masters' action in employing blacklegs to break the strike, they will no longer be able to rest assured that the power of the Federation is dead, for behind the Federation officials has arisen the threatening power of the democracy itself, impatient with their leaders and as zealous for God's righteousness and their own social

rights as a few years back they were zealous about the safety of their little separate souls.

The Welsh workers are too human to cast aside the religious instinct. The revival was the last flare of dissent. They cannot be satisfied with a foreign and gentlemanly Church of England. They are no longer terrified by the bogey god and devils of Calvinism. The dissenting sects are dwindling, the Papists make no headway, the New Theology has prepared the ground and the Independent Labour Party has watered it. If there should, one day, come a humanist, social, and democratic revival in Wales, there might yet arise a Welsh National Church within the internationalism of Christendom, and our children's children would reap a Catholic Harvest.

SALVATIONISM

Persecuted and zealous—The mystery of philanthropic motive—Army and millionaire — In Darkest England — Huxley's warning — Sources—Charges against the Army—The field officers—Failure concealed—Finance—Philanthropic industrialism—Emigration—Failing evangelism — Origins of converts — Its theology and Methodism — Possible devolution — Constructive elements — At best undesirable—Danger of nationalisation—The only way.

SALVATIONISM

THE Salvation Army, at one time mobbed by roughs, doubted by the rich, and cold-shouldered by the respectable, has now become a popular institution, and stands a far better chance of nationalisation than do the railways, or the public-houses. On the one hand, there are the victims of oppression, the outcasts, the wretched, the drunkards, the people who sit in darkness; on the other hand, is this little band of enthusiasts, the "blood and thunder" zealots, for blood is the colour of their uniform and the burden of their song. Though the orthodox were ignorant of them and the respectables knew them not, these sons of thunder came out into the open, were stoned by the skeleton armies, were drenched in mud and rain, were parched with the heat, tired with shouting and forced marches; they never lost courage, they stuck to their flag and to their faith, faith in God and the General and the "bottom dogs."

It is common knowledge that parents who would never dream of entering a church themselves are often rigorous with their children in the matter of church attendance and the Sunday School. In the same fashion the English public who have long since

discarded the salvationist faith, zealously subscribe to the salvationist funds. Educated people seem to think that a religion which is by no means good enough for them is quite good enough for the submerged. They themselves are in no need of disciplining with the fiery terrors of hell ; but it is good that street evangelists should still believe it, for to what other gospel but that of terror would cadgers and hooligans respond ? Salvationism is sincere and at the same time melodramatic, and it was thought that it might be successfully propagated among those lower orders who applaud a Surrey melodrama.

Millionaires were not slow to see the value of the "Army" and the "General," and General Booth has not been slow to see the value of millionaires. Now, the millionaire is often a kindly soul who hates to think of want and destitution among the poor, and takes good care not to think of them too often. He loves pluck and enthusiasm, and business ability, and he finds all three in the "General" and his followers. A tribute to the strenuous enthusiasm of the "Army" may be quoted from the pages of its severest critic, for Mr Manson writes : "The heroic efforts of an aged autocrat to control and maintain the costly and ineffectual system that has overmastered him, might well constitute a pathetic spectacle even for an enemy ; that of the Army's thousands of devoted officers, blindly labouring with much privation and infinite effort to gather fruits which they are not allowed to see, would commend its meed of admiration even in an age that had lost the savour of self-sacrifice."

In Darkest England and the Way Out was not

only a cry for help but a threat. The rich found themselves faced with the trouble of salvage or the terrors of Socialism. The kindly millionaire admits that our admirable social system incidentally manufactures human wreckage. To prevent a wreck is revolutionary, besides being unbusinesslike, or, in other words, not good business for the millionaire; but to save the wreckage, or some little of it, is harmless and humane—hence the plutocratic support of the Salvage Army and the popularity of the Feast of Booths. Mr Bramwell Booth has recently dotted the *z*'s and crossed the *z*'s of the original threat, and Mr Rider Haggard has underlined it. General Booth himself has no illusions, for he admits that under the present system "multitudes are not so much born as damned into this world." Capitalism produces cadgers, dead-beats, born-tireds, alcoholics, wastrels, criminals, idiots, and prostitutes; therefore, for God's sake! support capitalism and cast out the life-line; lure the ship on to the rocks and scramble for the treasure, but do not forget the Royal Humane Society and the prizes it offers to the friends of the drowning. Thus opened the last chapter in the wreck and rescue crusade of the English philanthropists. It is impossible to say how far the comfortable classes are conscious and deliberate in the carrying out of their charitable plots. It is as impossible altogether to exonerate the shrewd leaders of the "Army" as it is fortunately possible to exonerate the petty officers, the little captains of the poor.

Considering the enormous sums expended upon the "Darkest England" scheme, it must be written

down a failure, and Professor Huxley's profound criticism is entirely justified. The General assured his supporters that only the most violent revolutionaries would oppose his scheme, but Professor Huxley was no revolutionary, and yet opposed it from the very beginning. Mr John Manson, Mr Horatio Bottomley, and many other publicists opposed to revolution, are engaged in exposing the social scheme.

After praising the poor uninstructed and exploited enthusiasts, the purity of their lives, the sincerity of their belief, and their cheery heroism, Huxley refuses to quarrel with these just men, preferring to direct his whole criticism "against Mr Booth's extremely clever, audacious, and hitherto successful attempt" to use the credit won by such immense devotion for the purposes of his autocracy. It must have been twenty years ago that this warning note was sounded in that memorable examination of the scheme, the results of which Huxley summarises as follows: "Mr Booth has captured and harnessed with sharp bits and effectual blinkers a multitude of ultra-evangelical missionaries of the revivalist school who were wandering at large. It is this skilfully if somewhat mercilessly driven team which has dragged this 'General's' coach-load of projects into their present position."

There lies before me Huxley's indictment, Mr Manson's *The Salvation Army and the Public*, the articles in *John Bull*, notes of personal interviews with salvationists, a file of newspaper cuttings, a dozen or so pamphlets, including the controversy between the "Army" and the Anti-Sweating Committee, protests from trade-unions in Canada, and letters from

labour officials, in addition to numbers of the Army's publications. From a careful examination of this mass of evidence, one is compelled to certain conclusions. While staff officers live in considerable comfort, many of the field officers and their families are on the verge of starvation; salvationists have themselves told me of their terrible financial anxiety, of the difficulty in putting the spiritual needs of the people foremost when they are driven into the position of cadgers and business agents. Mr Bramwell Booth points to the numbers of local officers drawn from the artisan class to prove the popularity of the work; but these men are impelled by a genuine zeal for religion, and by the sorry fact that, when thousands are unemployed, a few shillings a week is better than nothing. These considerations force them into blind and uncritical obedience to intolerable regulations, which restrict them in the choice of a wife, which forbid them wine and tobacco and the ordinary recreations of their class.

A careful study of the Army regulations suggests the fact that just that kind of moral pressure is brought to bear upon young soldiers, many of them almost children, that is employed, but never so recklessly, by monastic bodies. The Army parades its few successes and conceals its huge failures. That it keeps twenty per cent. of its converts, would be a generous exaggeration; but beyond the fact of these failures there arises the more serious fact of thousands of desertions from its official ranks. That the public subscribes so generously towards so ungenerous a result is not the most serious consideration. It is

the particular mark of salvationism, as of Eddyism and other heretical organisations with which I am dealing, that they attempt to build up in their converts the belief that obedience to their tyrannical regulations is obedience to heaven, and that desertion from them is desertion from God.

Such an attempt naturally fails in the case of a robust and well-proportioned character, but it is not these characters which the Army to any large extent attracts, and in the case of the hypersensitive, the ill-instructed and emotional, the attempt is disastrously effective.

I have already spoken of the large sums contributed by the public, who, while they do not greatly believe in the "General's" religion, do believe in his social schemes.

The Army makes a great parade of its balance-sheet, audited by an eminent firm of accountants, but this publication deals with only a small percentage of the funds, the bulk of which are collected from the public at more than a thousand local centres throughout England. The unfortunate local officer knows only too well that it would be almost futile to make an appeal for money for the purposes of carrying on a salvationist conventicle and preaching salvationism, so he draws an alluring picture of what "we" are doing to relieve the poor, to nurse the sick, and to socially regenerate the submerged. In point of fact, the evangelistic and social departments are entirely separate, the local evangelist has nothing to do with the social wing, yet the money so gained goes almost in its entirety to the support of the local gospel

preaching ; the public believe themselves to be subscribers to a scheme of social regeneration, whereas they are merely supporting the discarded faith of Little Bethel. The same criticism holds of the self-denial week, which is not so much a period of fasting and saving among the members of the sect itself as of rampant and energetic begging from the public at large. In the self-denial appeals the social work is given prominence while only a small percentage of the self-denial funds go to the support of that work. Of course, if General Booth's assurances to the public had been fulfilled, there would be no need, on his own showing, for collecting any considerable sums for the social wing, for the chief attraction of the "Darkest England" scheme, in the eyes of the rich business subscriber, lay in the assertion that the farm colonies and industrial works would soon be self-supporting.

The Hadleigh colony, which was to support six thousand settlers, barely supports two hundred and fifty, and the word "support" is actually inapplicable, for it shows an enormous annual deficit on its working, and Hadleigh is a fair example of the thousand-and-one industrial undertakings of the Army. The charitable wood-chopping industry is a favourite with socio-religious organisations, subsidised by the middle classes financially, and subsisting upon their orders. The ordinary business of wood-chopping is not thereby increased by so much as one bundle, but merely diverted into a novel channel : the number of unemployed who thereby find work is duly advertised, and that other number of employed who thereby lose, duly suppressed. At a mass meeting of firewood

merchants and work-people in the trade, held in 1905 at Trinity Hall, Deptford, it was stated that thousands of work-people had been thrown out of employment by this particular solution of the unemployed problem, and a bundle measuring fourteen inches by six inches was exhibited at the meeting, which had been made and sold by the Church Army for two shillings and ninepence per hundred, which sized bundle could not be sold profitably by the "trade" under three shillings and threepence per hundred. The Salvation Army was denounced for employing like methods. The following resolution was passed: "That this meeting of firewood merchants, makers, and work-people *strongly* condemns the making and trading of bundles of firewood by charitable organisations, etc., as being unfair and mischievous competition with legitimate 'trade'; which competition tends to lower prices and wages, besides unduly interfering with the labour market of the 'trade' and throwing numbers of industrious work-people out of employment."

Perhaps an even more scandalous instance of Salvationist sweating is to be found in the Joinery Works in Hanbury Street, Whitechapel. It is fortunate, indeed, for the Army that the present officials of the labour world are so largely Puritans and local preachers, inclined to deal tenderly with dissenting brethren; but even trade-union officers have been compelled to protest against the victimising of the poor in Army institutions. The United Workers' Anti-Sweating Committee publishes a damaging exposure, but even more damning are the evasive replies in Army publications. How can we

be expected, say General Booth and his officers, to give good wages to unskilled and worthless workers, when "ill-health, inefficiency, poverty, partial knowledge of their craft drive them to us"? Do the labour agitators want us to "turn these poor fellows out, and send them back to the Embankment, or, worse still, to the cold river itself"?

It is an imbecility to suppose that incapables can be paid at ordinary rates. Such places as the Hanbury Street "elevator" are described as "industrial hospitals" for drunkards and wastrels. But when we consider that the Army runs a very large number of industrial centres for unskilled and "damaged" labour, rag-picking, waste-paper sorting, wood-chopping yards, and so forth, it seems unreasonable to suppose that they would select the untrained and the wastrels for the particularly skilled work of carpentry, joinery, and painting, work which competes for contracts in the ordinary market, and often manages to secure them by reason of its low wages and long hours and its unfair subsidies from the subscribing public. In the Army's own *Year Book* for 1908 (p. 43) it is admitted that "the majority are accomplished hands, and able to do any kind of work usually carried on in these trades." After careful inquiry and consideration of the Army's answers to critics, the conclusion of the United Workers' Anti-Sweating Committee is that,¹ "individually, or on an average, the value of the

¹ Cf. *Salvation Army Sweating*, a reply to misstatements by General Booth and his officials, 1d., United Workers' Anti-Sweating Committee, 93 Chancery Lane. Even old-fashioned Dissenters are beginning to be scandalised at the cruelty of the "Army" in the case of the recent evictions at Boxted.

men's labour is enormously higher than the payment in cash and truck given them by the Army, and that the Army uses or appropriates the surplus, and the liberal contributions of the public, in some fashion which the Parliamentary Committee's investigations have, unfortunately, failed to make clear."

The emigration scandals in connection with the Salvation Army are at present so much in evidence in the pages of the Press, that it will not be necessary to elaborate them here. It will be sufficient to record the general result of recent inquiries to the effect that the Army receives large sums of money in Europe by giving harrowing descriptions of overcrowding and unemployment among the European poor and by painting the Colonies in glowing colours as El Dorados for unemployed labour, while in these same El Dorados it is receiving large sums of money for the ostensible purpose of feeding and otherwise helping the Colonial victims of unemployment, overcrowding, and starvation.

In spite of repeated warnings of the Canadian Government, that only skilled agriculturalists and domestic servants are required, warnings reiterated by Colonial trade-union leaders who do not hesitate to describe the Army's action as the deliberate luring of men to their destruction, such advertisements as the following are common in the English Press: "Great demand for workers in Canada—men and women. Accommodation on steamers being rapidly taken up. Immediate application necessary. Salvation Army now organising weekly conducted parties. Work guaranteed. Programme for 1910 free on

application. Address Colonel D. C. Lamb, 170A London Road, Liverpool." It is true enough that when an intending emigrant is sufficiently wide-awake to make further inquiries, the Army's agents will admit that he may not get employment at once in his own particular line of business, but work of some sort is guaranteed him, and no doubt in a very few months he will find an opening in his own trade. Emigrants are encouraged by such statements as the following: "Absolute poverty as we are only too much accustomed to it in the home cities is conspicuously absent,"¹ and by the hope held out to them that Western Canada is a country where Socialism is not prevalent "because the individual has too good a chance of acquiring property for himself." In face of these specious promises, the Canadian newspaper reports of starvation and unemployment, and of the charitable and untiring work of the Army in relief efforts are not without an element of tragic humour. The *Manitoba Free Press* of 24th December 1909, the actual year of Colonel Lamb's advertisement, reports that "the work of supplying Christmas hampers to the thousands of poor families was placed entirely in the hands of the Salvation Army." These victims of poverty "were mostly men and women who appeared to need a meal," and were "for the most part English-speaking people." Another paper reports: "In addition to the dinner, the Army distributed over eight hundred baskets to needy families throughout the city. At the same time the report of the All Peoples' (Methodist) Mission states: "We have had an un-

¹ *Salvation Army Emigration Gazette*.

precedented number of appeals for employment and clothing this year, which have not ceased yet, men still being unable to obtain work which will yield enough to support their families." It must be remembered that the Army not only collects large sums in connection with its emigration schemes, but charters steamers for its emigrants, charging them "only ordinary fares," earns commissions from the shipping companies, receives capitation grants, and is able to do business more cheaply than other agencies. Every year it receives thousands of pounds on account of passage-money commissions, fees, and grants.

If the social work of the Army has failed, its failure as an evangelising agency has been even more abject. General Booth in 1865 commented on the lack of success attending ordinary evangelical methods, and was confident that the whole field of unregenerate England lay in his own hands for the reaping ; but according to the most favourable statistics available,¹ the attendances at Salvationist conventicles were only a little above two per cent. of London total attendances, and these, of course, include the crowds at the Hackney Congress Hall, the Westminster Abbey of Salvationism, of whom but few are adherents of the sect. In East London other missions have far outdistanced the Army's results, in spite of the fact that no other effort is so extensively advertised as that of General Booth. Other parts of London and the majority of provincial centres are in worse case than the East End ; and a failure is more marked when we remember that although the Army

¹ *Daily News* religious census.

does not profess to evangelise from other religious bodies, but only to supplement their work among the unconverted and irreligious, Sir Charles Booth, whose authority as statistician will hardly be questioned, is convinced that many, if not most, who join the Army in England have come to it from some other religious body, and may even have been ardent Christians previously.

In face of all this, it is difficult to explain the extraordinary attraction that the Army has for certain of its recruits. However liberal an allowance is made for disillusionment and defections, the fact remains that there is an element of what Mr Bernard Shaw has, I think, described as Dionysian joy in the service of the Army. This element is not uncommon in Methodist revivalism, and General Booth's movement is the latest phase in Methodism. The older Wesleyan bodies have to a great extent become stereotyped and conventional, and the fires of Methodism are kept going in such developments as that of the Salvation Army. The weakness of "the method" lies in the fact that it is purely revivalist, and has concentrated on only one side of Wesley's more constructive and yet already one-sided faith. Unlike Wesley, it ignores the Sacraments, for the very good reason that it directs people's attention away from the outward and visible signs of this world to what it considers the inward and spiritual substance of the next. It is frankly next-worldly, and preaches the fiery terrors of its hell and the sugary rewards of its heaven with absolute conviction. Its devotees have within themselves no assurance of the transforming

of these material cities into the City of God and of His Christ, but have, on the other hand, escaped from the gloomy Calvinist conviction that the majority of mankind are doomed to destruction. Calvinism cannot be Dionysian, Methodism can. Although its religious outlook is gloomy, as regards this secular world, and its faith is faith of the fire-escape order, yet the escape is possible for all, and there is no greater joy to be found than in teaching all and sundry the use of it. This joyous enthusiasm, really humanist in spite of its inhuman despair of this world, increases in the unconventional atmosphere of the Army, with its barbaric use of music, colour, and movement.

In spite of all criticisms, there remains the fascinations of autocracy for many minds, and it must be confessed that General Booth is by no means an unattractive autocrat. He has been described by one of his intimates as "evangelist, preacher, maker and manager of the Salvation Army, company promoter, assurance director, banker, farmer, printer, publisher and bookseller, tea merchant, commission agent for lamps, bicycles, pianos, and drapery, author, hymn-writer, financier, politician, and monarch of men's consciences in all parts of the world."¹ It is remarkable how often one finds this amazing versatility in the leaders of religious movements; and it must not be forgotten that, although the present indictment of General Booth's methods is if anything an understatement, it would be crude and uncharitable to suppose that the General is merely a financial

¹ *John Bull*, 17th April 1909.

genius. He combines with more sordid aims a religious enthusiasm which, although narrow, is the swifter and more vigorous in fact of its very limitations.

It would be as difficult to prophesy what results will follow the death of the General, as it would be difficult to prophesy the precise line its development would have taken had his wife lived. It is possible that her spirituality and purity of character might have held in check the more undesirable developments of recent years; but the strength of her influence would have been hardly sufficient to restrain the personality of Mr Bramwell Booth, who is at the present moment the controller and defender of the Army's most objectionable undertakings.

Mr Bramwell Booth most conspicuously upholds the Army's bad tradition of resenting all criticism; and if the General has chastised his followers with whips, I fear his son will chastise them with scorpions. And possibly the scorpion policy may actually be the best; for in the days of Rehoboam it led to revolution, and nothing but a revolution can now save the Salvation Army.

In such a revolution would the more humanist and constructive elements come to the top? for of the existence of these elements anyone who has listened to Major Millner at the Congress Hall, or to the addresses of many of the little captains, must be convinced. But even were such better notes to predominate, it would still be more than questionable whether a body subsidised by the rich for relief and patronage of the poor would not always be a source

of danger rather than of strength. It would seem undesirable in the extreme to lead weak and starving persons into the temptation of cant and spiritual dishonesty in conventicles and workshops, where the "converted" will always be the pets of the officers and the prospect of employment will always be measured by the docility of the submerged.

It is not only the Army's reputation for questionable speculation, but this evil habit of putting a premium on outward professions of religion, that makes it imperative that we should be on our guard against attempts such as that of the Majority Report to subsidise its work, and the work of kindred religious agencies, by grants from the national exchequer, and to give its officers official, or semi-official, positions. And if the Army's failure to help the submerged, that very class which they came into existence to help, is self-evident, is this the moment to endow General Booth and his followers with funds to be used on behalf of that larger class of respectable artisans who mistrust and despise the Army and its methods?

The deep-rooted suspicion, implied in the contemptuous attitude of so many of the workers towards the Army, found a voice in the warnings of an Anglican priest of the last century.¹ The religious world of to-day "fancies the Kingdom of Heaven grows like some prodigious fungus, that its power can only be given to a huge and clamorous multitude, and that a true Church must hire nothing less than a hippodrome." Mr Hancock's final word on popular religio-social schemes is memorable: "You

¹ Thomas Hancock's *Pulpit and Press*.

may set up a patent social factory for converting the raw material of pauperism, vagabondage, and harlotry into competent, orderly, and moral men and women ; but, while you are busy on this, the Mammon which has found the money for your factory does not, and will not, cease to be as busy as ever in his own factories, heaping up a hundred-fold denser mass of new paupers, new vagabonds, and new harlots." Almsgiving, subscription lists, and benevolence by proxy will not save England from the terrors of revolution, nor her rich men from the damnation of hell. Some day they may learn to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and in that day the deadly oppression under which both rich and poor are groaning will be lifted from the soul of the nation, and the salvation of England will be accomplished.

THE SABBATARIANS

Consequences of rigorism—pre-Christian history—No Jewish precedent except in Jewish corruptions — Christ as anti-Sabbatarian—Evidence from “Acts” and Epistles—New Testament abolishes Sabbath—Early Church attacked by Jews on this point—Patristic evidence — Constantine’s decree — Mediæval Sabbatarians — Anglican Church and Continental reformers attack Sabbatarians—*The Book of Sports* and Puritans—The fourth commandment—The Scotch Sabbath—The Puritan tyranny in America—The Church almost succumbs—Reaction—The Sunday Rest Movement.

THE SABBATARIANS

"I WONDER God does not choke you for laughing!" was the expression used by a Scottish mother to her children, as Saturday drew to a close and "God's Sabbath" approached. The inhuman rigorism expressed in this typically Puritan remark has driven hundreds of thousands into atheism and despair. It has often been said that anything could be proved from Scripture, and the existence of a multitude of warring sects, each claiming to be exclusive interpreter of the Word, would seem to justify the assertion.

With the rise and development of the science of Biblical criticism such sayings will become less possible, but there was in reality no time at which the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, taken as a whole, could be made to yield the doctrine of the Sabbatarians. There is no kind of warranty throughout the pages of the Old Testament, let alone the New, for the inhuman assumptions of the Puritans.

The origin of the weekly rest day is obscure. We have records of one day in seven having been observed among the Accadians about five thousand years before Christ, but among them it was apparently kept as a fast rather than a festival. The Jews keep

the Saturday or Sabbath as feast, not fast, giving as their reason a quaint belief that their God was tired after His six days' labour of creation and had to rest on the seventh; and also the less irreverent reason that God delivered their forefathers on a Saturday from the bondage of Egypt. It will be shown that the Puritans take up an anti-Christian attitude in their observance of the Sabbath, but it is not so generally realised that their position is pre-Jewish and can claim no support from Jewish Scriptures. In these books humanitarian reasons govern Sabbath custom. The labourer and the beasts must have their due meed of rest. A distinction between work and play was upheld. Such trivial labour as gathering sticks or lighting a fire was visited with the death penalty, but dancing, drinking, and merriment were not discouraged. In spite of its severity the Sabbath law was passed "for man," that time might be found him for worship, political instruction, and secular recreation. It was not only Christ who called men back to the humanism underlying the Judaic legislation, but Rabbi Jonathan is said to have asserted that the Sabbath was delivered into the hand of men, not men into the hand of the Sabbath. It is possible that this saying should rather be attributed to Rabbi Shimeon, who lived nearly two hundred years after the time of Christ.¹

But with the march of pious infidelity and political corruption there arose among the Jews teachers of sour views who, exalting and twisting the letter, and debasing the spirit and intention to which it gave witness began to bind men with those very precepts

¹ Cf. James Drummond, *Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. ii. p. 550.

made for their deliverance until, in the time of Jesus, a woman was not allowed to carry her smelling-bottle on the Sabbath nor lame men their crutches, for was not the carrying of burdens forbidden on the sacred day of rest? Jesus broke through this pious blasphemy with His angry cry: "You lay on men's shoulders burdens too heavy to be borne. You twist God's law into an inhuman absurdity, for the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. You make the law of God of none effect by your traditions." When a nation loses the spirit of its laws, the liberating laws become a ridiculous tyranny, so much so that Christ had to go further and become the law-breaker that He might shock the religious world of His day into some sense of religion. One of the Evangelists calls Him a Sabbath-breaker,¹ and there is no doubt that He infringed not only the current interpretation of the Old Testament law, but the law itself, in His defence of His followers when they plucked the ears of corn, in His approval of David's lawlessness, and in His command to the sick man to carry his mattress. If there had been any intention on the part of Christ, or of His Church, to retain the Sabbath while changing the day from Saturday to Sunday, it is inconceivable that an Evangelist should have recorded the post-Resurrection journey from Jerusalem to Emmaus, when we remember that the permissible Sabbath Day's journey was limited to five and a half furlongs, or a little over half a mile, and the distance travelled by Jesus on this occasion was about seven miles.

¹ John v. 18.

It is significant that the Christian Hexalogue is as follows: (1) Thou shalt do no murder; (2) Thou shalt not commit adultery; (3) Thou shalt not steal; (4) Thou shalt not bear false witness; (5) Honour thy father and thy mother; (6) Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. This is the whole duty of man, even as given by Jesus to fellow-Jews, still under the law.¹ More striking still is the Fourth Gospel account of the line He took with His Sabbatarian opponents. They were beyond measure shocked at His Sabbath actions, for did not the Old Testament teach them that their Father rested on the seventh day? Instead of answering them to the effect that what He and His disciples did could hardly be considered as work, He replied, in words which no doubt must have seemed to the pharisaic world of His day as blasphemous as this chapter will seem to the pharisaic world of to-day, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

It would indeed be curious if it had been left for the Puritans to discover His mind in this matter, and to correct the teachings of the Epistles of St Paul and the universal tradition of His Church. That St Paul approved the abandonment of the Sabbath would seem indisputable, for he tells us that one man esteems one day above another, while another man regards every day alike. Let each one do as his conscience approves. With those who observe days, and months, and seasons, and years, he pleads: "How turn ye back again unto the weak and beggarly rudiments whereunto ye desire to be in bondage over again?"²

Cf. His answer to the rich young man.

² *Cf.* Gal. iv.

In the Epistle to the Colossians, he writes: "Let no man judge you in meat or drink, or in respect of a feast day, or a new moon, or a Sabbath Day."¹ The Sabbatarians insist correctly that the Sabbath is an institution of the Mosaic Law, and they must know that its observance was one of the points in keen dispute between Jewish and Gentile converts, and moreover, that Sabbath-breaking was as rampant among the Gentiles as the evasion of circumcision. How, then, do they account for the fact that among the full and frequent lists of actions classed as sinful by the writers of the Epistles, Sabbath-breaking is not so much as once mentioned; and for the further fact that the dispute about the Mosaic Law grew so furious that the Apostles were compelled to assemble in council admitted by Sabbatarians as well as others to be inspired, and to issue a solemn decree² releasing foreign converts, *i.e.* the bulk of the Christian world, from the Mosaic Law in *every* particular save four, and that among the four the Sabbath is not included? It seems good to the Puritans to lay upon us the burden of a gloomy day, but "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and us to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things." Thus was passed the Magna Charta of the Christian Church, as duly recorded in the Christian Scriptures.

In consequence of the Sabbath having received its death-blow at the hands of the New Testament, the first Christians worked a seven-day week, ignoring the Saturday rest and assembling themselves together in the early morning of their weekly resurrection

¹ Cf. Col. ii.

² Cf. Acts xv.

feast, and after service going back to their ordinary duties. Many were slaves, and could not have helped themselves, but the richer converts observed no different rule, and Sunday was a favourite day with them for plying their needles on behalf of the poor. Sabbath-breaking was a common accusation brought against them by the Jews, and to that accusation they did not and could not reply, "We have merely changed the day," but in consideration of the Lord's example and the restful and recreative spirit engendered by their religion, they defended themselves with the reply, "Every day is a Sabbath to the Christian." "You suppose, because you are idle for one day of the week, that you are pious . . . our God is not pleased with such observances . . . the heavens are not idle, nor do they observe the Sabbath."¹ In an interesting book called *The Christian Sabbath*, a catena of the Fathers is given, and quotations are made from Clement, Tertullian, Origen, Victorinus, Eusebius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Epiphanius of Constantia, and Jerome. These authors, one and all, regard Sabbatarianising as the heresy of the Jews which was abolished in Christ.² The popular title amongst Christians of these early days is "The Lord's Day," or "The Day of the Sun," and it is only later, when the danger of Sabbatising was not so acute, that they allowed themselves occasionally to call it "The Christian Sabbath"; but in the early Church the evidence is all against the

¹ Cf. Justin Martyr, *Dialogue* xii. ; cf. also Irenæus, *Against Heresies*.

² Cf. for further information my pamphlet on *The Day of the Sun* (Nutt, 1901); and in greater detail, Hessey's Bampton Lectures.

Puritan assumption that the rare use of this latter title implied their own Sabbatarian notions.

In 321 A.D., the Emperor Constantine, still a pagan, issues an edict securing rest and the closing of the shops on the first day of the week. Incidentally this edict delighted the Christians, for it gave them more leisure for worship, and to themselves, as to all men, opportunities for much-needed rest. The Church was anxious to make all its holy days holidays, and it was thus able to secure its object on at least one of its chief feasts, and Sunday thus became a day not only of worship but of leisure and recreation. Sabbatarianism proper first appears as a heresy in the mediæval Church. Frowned on by authority, it yet found considerable support in France and England, and Eustace of Flay, in 1200 A.D., pretends to discover a letter fallen from heaven breathing out threatenings and slaughter against those who presume to walk, or shave, or frivel on Sunday. I do not know if the Puritans will care to claim Monk Eustace as the morning star of the Reformation. Although certain mediævalists record ridiculous rules which allow the dressing of meat and forbid the washing of plates, and exonerate travellers to shrines while forbidding their return on the Lord's Day, the official Church was content if men would cease as far as was possible from their ordinary trades, pursuits, and gains on holy days, of which Sunday was one, and present themselves at God's altar; for the rest they might amuse themselves as they thought fit.

The post-Reformation Church of England is the inheritor of this rational doctrine, and in our own

time, when so many of our priests have gone over bag and baggage to the Puritan enemy, it is well to remind Anglicans of the fact. True, the Anglican Church has never thundered against the Sabbatarians so loudly as Calvin, who insisted that the Sabbath was abolished, or Luther, who orders his followers, if people should try to curtail their liberty in the matter, "to work on it, ride on it, dance on it, feast on it."¹ Bucer, Peter Martyr, and other Continental reformers were equally emphatic. Indeed, Continental Protestants know practically nothing of the heresy, and Sabbatarianism is almost exclusively the religion of English and Scotch Puritans. When Archbishop Laud caused the decrees of *The King's Book of Sports* to be proclaimed from the national pulpits, the Nonconforming Puritans refused to read them.²

The people of Lancashire had complained to the king that they were being bullied by innovating preachers into giving up their merry Sunday customs, and we can well imagine the disgust of the said preachers when ordered to read the decrees which safeguarded democratic rights against these new and narrowing encroachments. With delicious effrontery, we are now informed that the expulsion of the Puritans who refused the old-time ruling of their Church was an act of cruel tyranny. If stern methods are ever to be justified, one can imagine no more justifiable occasion for their use than this muzzling of

¹ Cf. Luther's *Table Talk*.

² Cf. "Nonconformist" is now loosely used as the equivalent of "Dissenter," but a Nonconformist in the accurate sense is one who looked upon the Dissenters as schismatics, and, while refusing to leave the Church, refused to conform to its regulations.

the dog-in-the-manger enemies of the poor. These persons, when they came into power, forbade the ringing of bells and all solemn feasting, except it were indulged in by "persons of quality." "No man must talk to his neighbours concerning pleasures or worldly things," and to throw a bowl on Sunday became as great a crime as to commit murder. The Puritans asserted that the fourth commandment in the Communion Service bound Englishmen to the Sabbath; but the Church in conference officially repudiated this interpretation and referred the Puritan opponents to the Church Catechism, which interprets that commandment as binding Christians "to serve God truly all the days of their life."

In England, under the Puritan regime, travelling and profanely walking on the Sabbath were severely punished; but we must go to Scotland and America if we wish to study the faith of these "champions of liberty" in its completeness.

In those countries they were not content with such trifling exhibitions of freedom as boring the tongues of Quakers with red-hot irons, for in Scotland they decreed that a man who saved a sheep out of a pit on Sunday should be condemned, and in America they decreed that a man who showed affection for his wife on Sunday by kissing her should be severely punished, and that repeated profanations of the Lord's day should render a man liable to the death penalty. It is extraordinary that in Scotland, where John Knox had preached against the Sabbath heresy, it was until quite recently a sin to laugh, to smile, or to whistle on that day, and there seems evidence for believing

that our poor persecuted opponents caused certain fishermen to do penance for violating the sanctity of the Sabbath by saving a shipwrecked crew from drowning on that sacred day. In course of time Puritanism gained a substantial footing in the National Church, and the Sabbath heresy became the popular faith of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

It is a dramatic comment on Sabbatarian restrictions that in Massachusetts, where Puritan legislation was severest, the theatres are now open on Sunday, and that in many of the States the Puritan bugbears of racing, acting, singing, and drinking are common features of that day.

There is, unfortunately, abundant evidence that the Sabbatarians do not agitate for restriction of hours on Sunday and a six-day week on humanist grounds. They do not wish the artisan to be secured in his liberty on the Sunday that he may do what he likes with it, but that they may do what they like with him; and although they employ humanitarian arguments in support of their designs, the sincerity of such arguments can easily be tested by asking them whether, if they were assured that the rest day would be used in football, amateur acting, and the reading of comic papers, they would still be its keen supporters. The answer will certainly be in the negative. It is rather ingenuous of them to pose as the humane advocates of the rest day of the working man when one of their most frequent complaints is that working men spend their Sundays in idleness.

One can hardly imagine a more serious or more hopeful movement than the international movement

springing up at the present time for restriction of hours, Sunday rest, and an equivalent period of rest for those who minister on Sunday to the needs and pleasures of the people. American and Continental employers, greedy for long hours of labour, should remember that they may be overreaching themselves in the matter of the seven-day week, for it is admitted that the six-day workman is a better craftsman than the seven-day man. In all civilised countries artisans are now in favour of curtailing Sunday labour, and the Sunday Rest Leagues of France and Belgium are artisan in origin and economic in aim although they very naturally receive the support of Catholic and Protestant ministers. The Paris League has more than four thousand members, and has been largely instrumental in obtaining the new regulations for partial Sunday closing of shops. And, in the Swiss cantons, shops are now closed in the afternoon.

As early as 1896 the Prussian Government took steps to free fifty thousand of its railway servants from all Sunday labour, and in Austria all but really necessary Sunday work is forbidden. In Germany, and in the French Provinces, most of the factories are now closed; but of course in Paris, as in France and in Germany generally, there is plenty of amusement in the way of beer-gardens, bands, and theatres. Many showmen complain of the Sunday work, and, of course, should be able to claim some other day of rest; and, as a fact, in many parts of France there is no performance in the local theatre on a Monday. In Paris the rest movement goes hand in hand with the demand for an eight-hour day, and is anti-

capitalist rather than pro-Sabbatarian. There is considerable difference between Bills for Sunday closing and Bills for the six-day week. For the most part, the Continent has no Saturday half-holiday, and this fact increases the importance for the people of Sunday recreation and the Sunday excursion.

In England the issues are complicated by Sabbatarian tradition and by Puritan elements in the labour world itself; but it is not unreasonable to hope that, with the decrease of Sabbatarianism and the increase of humanism, a vigorous movement for an eight-hour day and a six-day week may spring into being. We may rest assured that this movement will not receive the support of the Lord's Day Observance Society, and the assurance will constitute further proof, if proof were needed, of the necessity of some such campaign.

THE HERESY OF THE TEETOTALLERS

Restricted use of term—The Devil in solution—Heresies of drunkenness and teetotalism—Alcohol as poison—Fermentation—William Cobbett's warning—Alcohol and the soul—Professor James quoted—The economic question—Dangers of alcoholism and of teetotalism—The vices of each—Solitary and social drinking—Christ's Sacrament—Christ not Oriental nor ascetic—The painter and the cross—The weaker brethren—Contrast with the Baptist—Cana—The wine-bibbing charge—Christ and the social value of wine—Wine and the European religion—Gilbert Chesterton quoted—Moderation condemned by teetotalers—Gin and teetotalism—Their effect on children—Continental drinking—In praise of taverns.

THE HERESY OF THE TEETOTALLERS

THE early Puritans were full of pride and Protestantism. They posed as martyrs on the slightest provocation and proved themselves hard taskmasters when they got the opportunity, but, in spite of all their vices, the heresy of teetotalism could not be laid to their charge. For all that, the Puritan teetotaler may, with a certain amount of justice, claim that his creed is in the line of development from theirs. And by the creed of teetotalism I mean something quite distinct and definite. There are thousands of people who do not drink what are generally known as fermented liquors ; it is but a small minority of these who hold the teetotal faith. Many people abstain because they are unfortunate enough not to like alcohol ; many others abstain because their friends and neighbours are unfortunate enough to like it too well ; others, again, abstain in obedience to a rule of living, popular in our day, called with some inaccuracy the simple life. Many of these people are Christians, and many of them agnostics ; some are Christo-theosophists, others are swayed by some other byway of belief. But the teetotal heresy is the creed of those who, professing

to believe in the Bible and the traditions of Christianity, assert that alcohol is the "Devil in solution," that this proposition can be proved from the pages of the New Testament, that there is no true medical scientist but supports it, that belief in it is belief in temperance, and that unless a man hold it, wholly and entirely, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. It is not, therefore, "total abstinence" that is here to be examined, but the foregoing type of total abstainer, and the term teetotalism will be used throughout the following chapter only in this defined and restricted sense. Drunkenness and teetotalism are the two opposed heresies, just as spiritism and materialism are opposed, or the teachings of Tolstoy and of Nietzsche are opposed. I have not, however, included in this volume the heresy of drunkenness, for although, unfortunately, it has many adherents in this country, they seem to tumble into it in spite of themselves, and do not attempt to define or defend it as a life-giving creed. It must, however, be remembered that there have been times and countries in which it has been so defended, and in which spirituous intoxication was associated with spirituality.

The teetotallers are never tired of repeating the sacred refrain of their faith, "alcohol is a poison," but as no one to my knowledge has ever attempted to deny it, the value to the teetotaller of this particular article of faith is not apparent. He would seem to labour under the impression that wine and beer and spirits alone contain alcohol, and he quotes an imposing array of authorities as to its poisonous nature, in ignorance of the fact that the medical world has

pointed to the poisonous qualities of tea, coffee, beef-tea, tobacco, distilled water, and a thousand other necessities or unnecessaries of life. Medical experts puff at their poisonous cigarettes, and sip their poisoned coffee, the while they enlarge upon the deleterious nature of the meal of which they have somewhat freely partaken, and their conversation is only interrupted by the entrance of the butler with the exhilarating whisky and the depressing soda. Sir James Crichton-Browne is under no delusion about fermented liquor. Poison it may be, but deadly it is not. Such was the opinion he expressed after dining with eighteen of the leading men of science, not one of whom refused alcohol. To speak of deadly poison in this connection he holds to be "farce, or obsession, or gross hyperbole." There is perhaps no subject more hotly debated among medical experts than the question of the action of alcohol on the body of man. The dispute in the pages of the daily Press often rages round the proposition, "Is alcohol a food or a poison?" but the debate is generally useless, because the debaters do not define their use of the term food nor recognise the relativity of the word poison. Dr Robert Park, in his *Case for Alcohol*, quotes a typical letter from a teetotalter, who says it is appalling that an elder of the Church should have defended whisky as a good creature of God, because "before whisky can be made, the process of fermentation and the destruction of wheat must take place, and thus wheat, 'a good creature of God,' by these means is turned into 'the Devil in solution,' or, as the great Robert Hall on one occasion

described alcohol, 'distilled damnation.'” This assertion, that the destruction of wheat by the process of fermentation necessarily implies something damnable, is the commonest plea of the teetotalter and at the same time the most amusing of his arguments, for he does not seem to realise that without this damnable fermentation he would not be alive at all. The energy with which he proselytises us is energy due to the very process he denounces, for the fermentation and destruction of wheat must take place in his stomach before it can be utilised as food, and alcohol is one of the first products of such fermentation. “The process of fermentation we now know to be the innermost key to the unlocking of the most secret processes of nature.”¹ That alcohol is not a food has been the contention of certain medical scientists, who have supposed that it was claimed that alcohol could be isolated from other aliments and proved to be a substitute in itself for other forms of nourishment. It would now seem certain that each alimentary contributor in isolation is deleterious. All become a source of danger above a certain dose. This fact, in conjunction with that other, namely, that the products are all products of fermentation, seems to destroy the teetotalter's favourite argument from medicine.

The violence of teetotal denunciations of beer, and their equally violent appreciation of tea, can be paralleled by a passage from William Cobbett's *Cottage Economy* (1824 edition). He is denouncing the drink “which has caused a very considerable part of the mortifications and sufferings of (the labourer's) life.”

¹ Cf. *The Case for Alcohol*, Robert Park (Rebman), p. 7; cf. 31 ff.

"Thus he makes his miserable progress towards death, which he finds ten or fifteen years sooner than he would have found it, *had he made his wife brew beer instead of making tea.*"

In his eagerness to condemn the beer we drink, at one time the teetotaler will object to the beverage in itself and combine with the trade to defeat a pure beer bill; at another he insists upon its gross adulteration, pointing out that in 1905, out of 1533 beer samples, 79 contained arsenic in excess of the limit. He argues that the glucose now so largely used contains a dangerous quantity of arsenic, that sugar is substituted for malt, and that invert sugar obtained by the action of vitriol on starch is often substituted for sugar. This is true enough, but these statements could hardly lead us to the teetotal conclusion, for the poisonous preservative is everywhere, and the reign of adulteration universal. Tinned goods are "jungled," vegetables coloured with sulphate of copper, peas sold for coffee, decomposed vegetation for jam, wood splinters for raspberry seeds, sand for sugar. Butter is corrupted with fat, meat tainted with tuberculosis, bread with potato-flour, and the adulteration of milk has become a public danger. So far, therefore, our examination drives us back to a wholesome vigilance concerning the purity of food and drink, and a wholesome temperance in the use of both.

The ulterior action of alcohol on the soul is even more interesting than its immediate action on the body. In cases of drunkenness the mask is removed and primitive man emerges. The priest in Hall Caine's *Bondman* must not be taken too seriously

when he excuses himself for having betrayed his comrade during one of his rare lapses into sobriety on the ground that "there's no telling what a man will say when he's sober." Sobriety, fortunately perhaps, disguises; and De Quincey points out how ridiculous it is to talk of being disguised in one's cups. Professor James devotes considerable space, in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*, to the question of drunkenness, by which he would seem to mean not the stupor of the drunkard but the exhilaration of the slightly intoxicated. "The sway of alcohol over mankind is unquestionably found in its power to stimulate the mystical faculties of human nature, usually crushed to earth by the cold facts and by criticisms of the sober hour. Sobriety diminishes, discriminates, and says, No; drunkenness expands, unites, and says, Yes. It is, in fact, the great exciter of the Yes function in man. It brings its votary from the chill periphery of things to the radiant core. It makes him for the moment one with truth. Not through mere perversity do men run after it. To the poor and the unlettered it stands in the place of symphony concerts and of literature; and it is part of the deeper mystery and tragedy of life that whiffs and gleams of something that we immediately recognise as excellent, should be vouchsafed to so many of us only in the fleeting earlier phases of what in its totality is so degrading a poisoning. The drunken consciousness is one bit of mystic consciousness, and total opinion of it must find its place in our opinion of that larger whole."¹ If Professor James' description of drunkenness is valid, the deduction must

¹ Page 387 ff.

certainly be made, namely, that the drinking habits of the workers must be considered in relation to the industrial problem as a whole. The teetotaler tells us that drink leads to poverty, and the anti-teetotaler that poverty leads to drink ; both statements are true, and the facts underlying each must be considered in conjunction. So voluminous a literature has grown up round this aspect of the subject that it will be unnecessary to deal with it in these pages. I may refer my readers to the works of Messrs Rowntree and Sherwell, to Mr Philip Snowden's booklet published by the I.L.P., and to Mr Cecil Chesterton's *The People's Drink*.¹ In Professor James' alluring description of the pleasures of drunkenness, the dangers of alcohol will at once be apparent ; and it will also be apparent that the Puritan whose philosophy centres round the belief in the power of inhibition and suppression as the only good thing in man, will enormously exaggerate the very real and admitted dangers of alcohol ; for, according to him, when the controlling barriers are down, there can pour forth from man nothing but a torrent of evil. But the human nature normally under control is in reality a complexity of impulses, good, bad, and indifferent. The removing of the barrier by drunkenness leads to the outpouring of very varying primitive emotions, and is a letting loose of angels and devils. Thus, some habitually mean men become generous in their cups, and apparently generous men sometimes give way to meanness. A man cruel by his creed or principle will by drink be kindled into kindness, but a funda-

¹ Published by the New Age Press, 3d.

mentally cruel man inhibited by the principle of mercy sometimes becomes a drunken fiend. Drunkenness is really a sin, but its sinfulness consists not in cruelty, nor in any other lust, but in complete loss of self-control, in the looseness of total unreserve. There is, at the other end of the scale, an opposite evil, and it is because the Puritan over-emphasises the one and under-emphasises the other that his creed must be classed with the heresies. That other evil is to be found in a stiff and ungracious reserve, the pride of the frozen nature that "keeps itself to itself"; these two natures lead—the one to the slovenly and lazy cruelties of the drunkard, the other to the deliberate and calculating cruelties of the Pharisee. The temperance reformer steers between the two extremes, appreciating the good that lies behind the philosophy of expansion and the philosophy of control. He recognises that a moderate use of fermented liquor stimulates body, brain, and spirit, and that alcohol is peculiarly valuable in northern countries, tending to encourage friendships among men and women ordinarily a little ungainly in behaviour and constrained in their nature. The temperance reformer will be in favour of any movement aimed at the gross evils of solitary drinking, so far as it is concerned with causes and not merely with results; he will be suspicious of attacks upon the public-house and the social drinking customs of the people, for he appreciates the action of the Founder of the Christian Religion in making exhilarating wine an outward sign in the sacrament of good fellowship; for normal cases he urges temperance, for abnormal total abstinence—that is to say, he

accepts the morality of the New Testament as interpreted by the tradition of Christendom.

It is not always realised how great a contrast exists between Christ's utterances and the utterances of certain other Oriental saviours. A critic of my book on *Socialism and Church History*, in the pages of the *Socialist Review*, complains that I have forgotten that Christ was an Oriental. Now, this is precisely what He was not—at least, in the popular sense in which the reviewer used the term. One is often directed by ascetics to such passages as "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee; it is better to enter into life maimed, than, having two hands, to be cast into hell fire." Now this particular passage, when closely examined, contains a fairly complete refutation of that very Puritan asceticism in whose support it is quoted. There are three terms in this one phrase which would be impossible to the ascetic¹ teacher. In the choice of the expression "right hand" is assumed the corruption of a powerful essential of the body. The expression "if" suggests that a usually good thing may become offensive if uncontrolled, and the expression "maimed" suggests that the better way is to enter into life with all one's faculties and control of all one's desires; but that life is the prize at all costs, and that the drunkard or the impure or the proud must obtain it, even at the cost of some one particular function or by the loss of some one particular limb. If control has become impossible,

¹ The word "ascetic" is here used in its popular sense; but it should be remembered that its more accurate use would be as an equivalent of the word "athletic."

then it must be suppression, although it is admitted that suppression is in all cases a loss and a maiming. In other words, when applied to the drink problem, the Gospel rule is—in normal cases, temperance; in abnormal, total abstinence.

One of the most striking things about the Gospels is their anti-Oriental character, their praise of activity as against passivity, their ideal of fullness of life as against emptiness and negation.¹ The New Testament would seem largely a development from those more robust and lively elements in the Old Testament which to a great extent differentiated Judaism from more passive Eastern creeds. Another passage often quoted in favour of asceticism is "Take up thy cross and follow Me," but this saying can as easily be interpreted of the painful process of control as of the process of suppression, and more probably refers to the necessity for social courage than to either of these individual processes. This has been well illustrated by the instance of an artist who wishes to express his joy in life through his painting, and finds himself in a city of Philistines who on ascetic grounds object to pictorial expression. He would either have to abandon his mission or to "face the music." Threatened by imprisonment, or even death, if his gospel was everything to him, he would himself be prepared to tread the way of the cross, and to say to his disciples, "Take up thy cross and follow me," and after-generations would praise him as the man "who,

¹ I am not here contrasting the Gospels with Oriental creeds as they really are, but with them as they are popularly supposed to be by Westerns.

for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame." So that such passages prove nothing beyond the fact that courage is good, and that a gospel worth living for is always worth dying for. We are often told that, although Christ may have taken fermented liquor Himself among His temperate fellow-countrymen, He certainly would not have done so in Europe of the present day. But this argument will not avail the teetotalter, who holds that, apart from any question of use or misuse, alcohol is *per se* the "Devil in solution." No amount of ingenuity will on that showing explain His use of it. As to whether He would or would not have used it now, such prophecies are a little futile, and everyone must be left to indulge his private fancy; but it should be noted that drunkenness, although by no means common, was not unknown among the Jews, and this fact would seem to dispose of that other teetotal assumption that, so long as a single weaker brother exists who might be tempted to its abuse, its use is prohibited to all charitable men. There can be no doubt that St Paul, who is responsible for the magnificent original which teetotalters have stereotyped for their own purposes, must have witnessed drunkenness in the crowded and over-civilised cities in which he preached. The people of those cities were familiar enough with this vice to make the warning, "No drunkard shall inherit the Kingdom of God," necessary; and yet no single passage from the Epistles can be brought forward which advocates total abstinence in place of temperance. If we examine Christ's action in this matter more closely, we find that in the Fourth

Gospel, which the Puritans accept as authentic, He deliberately contrasts His own temperance with the Baptist's abstinence; the John who came neither eating nor drinking, with the Son of Man who comes eating and drinking; the ascetic who mourned to them and they would not weep, with the joy-bringer who piped to them and they would not dance. The followers of the ascetic become followers of the Christ, and His first action was to take these amazed and puzzled disciples one Sabbath¹ Day to a wedding feast at which probably there was dancing and certainly drinking. And when the guests had somewhat freely indulged,² instead of subjecting the party to a teetotal homily, He replenished their supply of wine. I am aware that some teetotallers contend that He turned the water into barley-water or some other "temperance" beverage; but, had that been the case, I can hardly imagine that the master of the feast would have exclaimed with evident satisfaction, "Thou hast kept the good wine until now."

This grotesque attempt to claim Christ as a teetotalter is surely not worth while in face of the explicit words of Scripture and the unbroken interpretation of the Church. What possible advantage would there have been in His enemies charging Him with being a wine-bibber unless the charge had been an exaggeration of His actual habit? They did not bring the charge against the Baptist because of its obvious futility. With Christ wine would always seem to have been associated with the meal and the fellow-

¹ Many commentators are convinced it was the Sabbath.

² The Greek hardly admits of dispute on this point.

ship. The wine-bibbing charge is coupled with the accusation of His friendship with the publicans and sinners, and, after instituting the Blessed Sacrament of bread and wine, He exclaims: "I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until I drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom." It has always been among the glories of the European religion in distinction to less human faiths, that its drinking habits have been associated with courage and fellowship rather than abandonment and despair.

Mr Gilbert Chesterton contrasts the Rubáiyát of Omar with the Gospel of Christ, for Jesus Christ makes wine not a medicine but a sacrament, while Omar makes it not a sacrament but a medicine. Omar drinks to drown his sorrow, Christ drinks to celebrate His joy. Omar feasts because life is not joyful; he revels because he is not glad.

"Drink," he says, "for you know not whence you come nor why. Drink, for you know not when you go nor where. Drink, because the stars are cruel and the world as idle as a humming-top. Drink, because there is nothing worth trusting, nothing worth fighting for. Drink, because all things are lapsed into a base equality and an evil peace." So he stands offering us the cup in his hand. And at the high altar of Christianity stands another figure, in whose hand also is the cup of the vine. "Drink," He says, "for the whole world is as red as this wine with the crimson of the love and wrath of God. Drink, for the trumpets are blowing for battle and this is the stirrup-cup. Drink, for this is My blood of the New Testament that is shed for you. Drink,

for I know of whence you come and why. Drink, for I know of when you go and where."¹

As Christ was certainly a moderate drinker, one would have thought that Christian teetotallers would at least have refrained from their favourite pronouncement to the effect that the moderate drinker is worse than the drunkard. Of course, their object is to frighten the temperance man out of his moderation; if they really meant it they should design us one of their lurid posters showing the downward progression from mere respectable drunkenness to the last stage of all, the moderate drinker's grave. Alcoholism seems to be for them the root of all evil, yet it has been well said that Cain did not come out of a tavern to murder his brother. It is often suggested that drunkards are - peculiarly stony-hearted with their children. This is the reverse of truth. Passionate cruelty too often results from hard drinking, but the worst kind of fiend in the records of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children is often the total abstainer. A drunkard is sometimes proud and hard-hearted; but hardness is not the besetting sin of the drinker, but of the abstaining prig who "thanks God he is not as other men are."

The effect of teetotal ethics upon the souls of children is at least as bad as the effect of gin upon their bodies. A fair specimen of the abstainers' doggerel for the young lies before me. An innocent child asks his mother why public-houses have doors and blinds, thus preventing his gazing in? Now, "mamma" might have reminded Paul Pry, junior, that

¹ *Heretics*, Gilbert K. Chesterton.

temperance hotels have doors and blinds, and that his own home was more private than any public-house, or that his elders, when they meet for a pipe and a glass, do not want to be pried upon by impertinent children; but, being the Puritan ideal of motherhood, "mamma" suggests that privacy must argue some awful wrong, and Young Pry resolves that by God's grace, when he cannot see what is passing, he will always conclude that "dark iniquity is going on."

The assumption that the tavern is a place essentially evil flows naturally enough from teetotal assumptions already dealt with. The Bishop of Birmingham and Mr Balfour have said many sensible things in praise of the Continental tavern, with its gardens and family groups and pleasant merriment, but their introduction into this country would mean more drinking and less drunkenness, and this is precisely what the teetotalters oppose. Callously indifferent to the fact that their policy of prohibition invariably increases the vice it is designed to diminish, they join hands with a minority of unscrupulous members of the "trade" in opposing every reasonable temperance reform.

Undesirable as are many features of the English public-house, if we could only get an English bishop to spend an occasional evening in an English tavern, not with the object of "doing good" but of enjoying himself, I believe his testimony would be of real value to the temperate and of no value to the teetotalter. In spite of all defects, the tavern possesses none of the exclusiveness of the private club, but is for all sorts and conditions of men. "I own," said a recent preacher in Newcastle Cathedral, "that I should like

to think that the sacrament of the brotherhood of man was first instituted under no private or exclusive roof, and there seems good evidence for supposing that the Lord's Supper was instituted in a public-house." Dr Johnson believed that "there is nothing which has yet been contrived by man by which so much happiness is produced as by a good tavern or inn." One of the finest theologians of the last century,¹ writing in praise of the taverns, speaks of them and of the parish churches as public-houses of the local republic. Archdeacon Paley wrote his theological treatises in a public-house. Archbishop Leighton longed to die in an inn. St Francis de Sales advised his clergy to make friends of the publicans, and Samuel Fish, the Quaker, upheld the inn-keeper and praised his honourable calling. For, wrote Bishop Earle, "a tavern is the busy man's recreation, the melancholy man's sanctuary, the stranger's welcome, the inns-of-court man's entertainment, the scholar's kindness, and the citizen's courtesy."

¹ Thomas Hancock.

KENSITITES AND THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

An early pamphlet—Sunflower worship—Satanic ritualism—Kensitism versus Dissent—Dissenters on schism—The reason of Kensitism—The Reformation period—The Anglican position—The Articles, a compromise—Clergy do not sign the Articles—Illogical position of Anglican Protestants—Their pharisaism—No quarrel with Evangelicals—The war against bigotry—Are the Kensitites worth expelling?—The unconsciously humorous.

KENSITITES¹ AND THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

THERE lies before me, as I write, an old pamphlet entitled *The Apostasy and Downfall of England*. Its author is a certain Mr Jack and it bears the inscription, "John Kensit, Publisher, 18 Paternoster Row," and seems to have been one of the earliest publications issued by the now notorious firm.

I have heard Satan described as the author of Protestantism, and he is in these pages claimed as the author of Romanism, which, we are informed, is a Satanic perversion of the worship of Jehovah, a foul thing which is devastating the Churches of "our beloved country."

The ritualists are the emissaries of the Devil, and their worship comes primarily from "the author of all ill," and through him from "ancient Babylon, from which early seat of idolatry it spread to all countries, corrupting Israel in the worship of Baal and Ash-taroath, and Greece and Rome in the worship of Apollo." We are further instructed to the effect

¹ I have assumed throughout this essay that the Kensitites are more or less sincere propagandists. For the alternative assumption that Kensitism is chiefly a financial speculation, cf. *Truth*, July 1, 1908; February 8, 1911; the reply of the Protestant Truth Society (7 Paternoster Row, E.C.), May 15, 1911; and the crushing rejoinder in *Truth*, August 2, 1911. Cf. also *Truth*, June 25, 1911.

that Baal and Apollo, or the Sun-god, were names among many others by which Satan procured worship to himself in the ancient world. The pamphleteer continues: "We see signs of a revival of this exploded paganism in England in these latter days, in the eastward position in Churches, and the aureola on the heads of the virgin and the saints, in the sunflower craze of a few years ago (I find in the church not far from where I live two large sunflowers over the communion table), in Sun Insurance companies, and even in sunlight soap, an emblem, shall we say, of Satan's fawning flatteries and deceits, for the pride of the serpent can lick the dust when it suits him in order to mock and betray." We are subsequently referred to Milton's description of Satan exalted in his sun-bright chariot, with the following comment: "Now, if we look at the advertisement of the *Sunday Sun* on the walls of London, or at the *Daily Sun*, we shall find Satan, however crudely portrayed, seated in his sun-bright chariot, and full of rage and hatred, as I believe, after his defeat by Michael and his angels in the heavenly places, careering over the globe." We are to "Note, too, the wings attached to the wheels—a blasphemous parody, I should say, of the chariot of the Lord."

These quotations are examples of Kensitite literature in its happier vein; with its more prurient¹ and

¹ *To Men Only* and the *Book for Boys*, books sold over the counter by a young girl to anyone who cared to ask for them, suggest just the kind of sins to children that the manuals for confessors are supposed to but do not suggest. The Kensit shop does a roaring trade in *Maria Monk* and other filthy books, which are otherwise only obtainable at obscenity depôts. For a Protestant refutation of *Maria Monk*, readers are referred to Col. Stone's *Refutation of the Fabulous History of the Arch-Impostor, Maria Monk*.

calumnious efforts it will not be necessary to deal. Neither do I propose to give a history of Church brawling and public rioting, but rather to sketch the underlying assumptions of the Kensit movement; for although in many Protestant quarters the campaign is looked upon with disfavour, it receives considerable support, both moral and financial, from a certain section of the middle classes. The Kensit group is largely composed of professing members of the Church of England.

Dissenters will rarely have anything to do with it; for, although the modern Dissenter is in a very different position in this matter from that of his forefathers, he disapproves the methods of Kensit while approving his aim. Dr Clifford and Mr Silas Hocking talk about "Rome on the rates," and charge the ritualists with disloyalty to the Church. Their position is, of course, quite untenable from the strict and logical dissenting view-point.

The early leaders of dissent came out from the Church because they considered her to be Catholic, and therefore no Church at all. Their charge against ritualists was not that they were disloyal to a Protestant Church, but that they were loyal to a Catholic Church with which they should have severed their connection long ago. If Dr Clifford is right in holding that the Church of England is Protestant and that ritualists are traitors to it, in that case he has no business outside it from the dissenting point of view. The early Dissenters were old-fashioned Christians, and therefore regarded schism as a crime, and would no more have thought of committing schism than of committing

suicide. Their separation was in their own eyes separation from a corpse-like parody that they might set up the true and only Church of God in the land. The Kensitites have as clear and defined¹ a case as had the old-time Dissenters. Dr Clifford has no case at all. The only thing that can be said against the Kensitite case is that it happens to be wrong, and a brief examination brings us to its fundamental mistake.

The period of the English Reformation which extends from the latter years of King Henry the Eighth to the closing years of Queen Elizabeth's reign, or to the first years of the Restoration, cannot be studied on black and white methods. It cannot obviously be described as wholly Catholic or wholly Protestant, and whatever may be true of it, this fact at least emerges, namely, that the post-Reformation Church of England did not consider itself to be breaking absolutely with its past, did not wish to exclude any but the extreme Calvinists and extreme Papalists. It wished to retain within its borders men who inclined to the old mediævalism — that is, the immediate past, and men who inclined to the new Protestantisms. It did not consider that such inclinations unchurched their authors. In the Henry the Eighth period the mediævalists, minus the Pope, had things pretty much their own way. In the Edwardian period the Anglican theologians were cowardly and vacillating and foggy minded, and in

¹ This requires modification, for I now understand that the Kensit "Training College" is largely recruited from certain types of dissenting young men.

practice, rich marauders who cared nothing for religion, Catholic or Protestant, had it all their own way. In the Marian period the Papists again triumphed. It is to the Elizabethan and subsequent periods that we must look for settlement, and it is very significant that the pendulum did not swing round in reaction against the Marian persecutions to extreme Protestantism. Whether in fact or not the Church remained essentially Catholic, or had as the Romanists affirm, lost its continuity, does not here concern us. It is sufficient to show that the Church of England considered itself essentially identical with the Catholic ages, although wishing to retain at its altars persons of the most varying convictions.

Whether or no this attempt at compromise was wise, whether or no the Anglo-Catholic theologians knew as much about primitive tradition as they imagined, the fact of the attempt is indisputable, as also that other fact, that they desired to reform an old Church on primitive Catholic lines, and not to create a new Church on Protestant assumptions. It was a period of mist and uncertainty, and theologians, Catholic in general sympathies but in violent antagonism to the claims of the foreign bishop, will often be found in association with Continental Protestants.¹ But then, everything on the Continent was in the melting-pot, and gradually the English Church drew off from its Continental supporters and began to define its position on distinctly Catholic lines.

¹ The term Protestant in England for some time signified one who equally protested against the Bishop of Rome and the extreme Evangelicals.

The militant Church Protestants seem deliberately to ignore this complicated history, and to urge that one thing alone is binding upon their brethren—namely, the Thirty-nine Articles of religion. These Articles, they say, and back their assertion by quoting the preamble, are binding upon Churchmen in their plain and literal sense,¹ but as the Thirty-nine Articles have been quite honestly interpreted in almost three-hundred-and-thirty-nine different ways, plain men will be a little puzzled as to the literal sense.

There never was a time in which their sense was not to be governed by an appeal to Scripture and to the Book of Common Prayer, and even if one made the wild supposition that the liturgy of the Church of England was not binding upon the sons and daughters of that Church, one would still have to face the fact that a Roman Catholic theologian of great learning wrote a treatise on the Articles, and, after minute examination, discovered that he could agree, possibly to all of them, certainly to all save one. Scottish and Anglican divines of undoubted learning and honesty have interpreted them in a Catholic sense. For instance, they point out that it is quite possible for a Catholic to accept Article 6, "of the sufficiency of Holy Scripture for salvation," Articles 12 and 13 on good works, Article 14 of works of supererogation, Articles 19 and 20 on the Church, and Article 21 on general councils. They further urge that Article 34

¹ This preamble presupposes the Catholic nature of the Articles, for it was the work of the Catholic party, published to exclude Protestant interpretations.

on the traditions of the Church should give Protestants some trouble, and that Article 35 on the homilies must be at least as awkward for Kensitites as for Catholics, in that they counsel fasting and speak of marriage as a sacrament. The most strenuous Protestant must at least admit that the plain sense of the Article on the sacraments must be governed in some degree by this Article on the homilies. As to the 25th Article, "of the sacraments," it has been pointed out that Protestants deny its position, for they hold that sacraments are "sure witnesses," but not "effectual signs of grace." The fact is, that the Kensitites who bawl about disloyalty do not even know that the phrase "effectual signs of grace" is borrowed from the Catholic schoolmen, and commits them to the doctrine of the mediævalists.

This Article does not condemn the five commonly called sacraments, but ambiguously and loosely describes them as partly states of life allowed in the Scriptures, and partly such as have grown of the corrupt following of the Apostles. One of them, at least, it admits as sacrament, and penance can hardly be described as a state of life; the plain meaning of this Article is, I fear, conspicuously absent alike for Protestant and Catholic, but Catholic theologians would urge that these five have not like nature of Sacraments, with Baptism, and the Lord's Supper. The Article on transubstantiation is welcomed by thousands of Catholics, who believe in the Real Presence while repudiating this particular explanation of it. The Articles on purgatory and the saints are accepted by Catholics, who, while fervently believing

in purgatory and worshipping the saints, repudiate "the Romish doctrine" concerning them.¹

The case, therefore, even if we consider the Articles apart from the liturgies, is flimsy enough from the Protestant point of view, and especially when we remember that the Church which put forward this strange document was composed in its inner councils of powerful men of both Protestant and Catholic tendencies, who deliberately wished to print a manifesto which would satisfy their respective followers. It is the assumption of immaculate loyalty to the Church of England, and the pharisaic presumption that all who differ from them are traitors, that is nauseating on the part of many Anglican Protestants. They suggest that their position is an easy, and, indeed, impregnable one within the Church of England, whereas it is in fact a thousandfold more difficult to defend than that of the people they are continually bullying. It would be bad enough if the Articles were the sole document of binding authority, but, when we realise that the terms of subscription have been considerably modified, their assumption becomes ridiculous. The Anglican clergy are not required to *sign* the articles. Until the year 1867, the clergy and others were required to assert that they "willingly and *ex animo* acknowledged the Thirty-nine Articles besides the ratification to be agreeable to the Word of God"; but since 1867, by the authority of Church and State, the form has been altered so that there is

¹ "The Romish doctrine" is a carefully penned phrase referring to certain superstitions of the fifteenth century condemned by many Roman Catholic theologians.

required of them only a general assent to the doctrine of the Church of England as contained in its three official documents—the Prayer Book, the Ordinal, and the Articles. Now, the Book of Common Prayer and the Ordinal are so notoriously Catholic that the early Nonconformists were expelled from the Church because they refused to conform to what they saw and acknowledged to be Catholic doctrine. What Kensitite would admit that the Virgin Mary ought properly to be called Our Lady? Yet the Book of Common Prayer calls her Our Lady. What Kensitite would admit that all Fridays throughout the year, and certain other days, are to be kept as fasts? Yet the book of Common Prayer orders them to be so observed. What Kensitite would admit that the proper ornaments for an altar are crucifix and candlesticks, as they were in the chancels of times past? Yet the book of Common Prayer ordains that “the chancels shall remain as they have done in times past.” What Kensitite is there who does not calumniate the ministers of the Church for retaining and using the vestments which the Prayer Book orders “shall be retained and be in use, as were in this Church of England by the authority of Parliament in the second year of the reign of King Edward the Sixth”? Just as little or as much as the Catholic is required to subscribe to the Articles, the Protestant is required to subscribe to the Ordinal in which the “Bishop with the Priests present shall lay their hands severally upon the head of everyone that receiveth the Order of Priesthood . . . the Bishop saying, Receive the Holy Ghost for the Office and Work of a Priest in the Church of God now committed

unto thee by the Imposition of our hands. Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven."

There lies before me a letter from a typical Protestant priest, who brings the usual complaint that I do not receive the Articles in their literal and grammatical sense. He is as perfectly satisfied with himself as they all are that his anti-sacerdotalism is impregnable. Does he, or, to put it generally, do any of them, accept the above-quoted words of the Ordinal in their literal and grammatical sense? Could any reasonable man have the slightest shadow of doubt as to the meaning of those words, and if such shadow existed, how long could it exist in face of the Prayer Book Office for the Visitation of the Sick—in which the priest so ordained and so entrusted with the power of remitting sins is commanded to move the sick person "to make a special confession of his sins if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which confession the priest shall absolve him (if he humbly and heartily desire it) after this sort—

"Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thine offences: And by His authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen"?

Anglican Catholics will refuse to quarrel with Evangelicals who ignore the literal and grammatical sense, as also the inward and spiritual significance, of their Prayer Book and their Ordinal. It is, after all,

an affair for their own consciences, and the Church of England deliberately includes as many types as possible within its fold. It is only a small and noisy minority of English Protestants who make themselves intolerable and who require rigorous suppression.

There is only one war of extermination which is at any time justifiable, and that is the war against the sour bigots who spend their time in the attempt to exterminate everybody else. But, after all, are the Kensitites worth expelling? Have they not made the world a merrier place with their little jokes about sunflowers and the thurifers, which they say they have seen suspended in front of the altars in their beloved Church of England?

SHORTER STUDIES IN CREDULITY

The Agapemonites and Brother Prince—A Calvinist mystic—Denial of the will—The revival at Charlinch—The Abode of Love—Perfectibility and cataclysm—Pigott's previous career—Saint or charlatan? The Messianic pretensions—The moral question—Elements of madness—Studies in monomania—The census—The Breathers—By their furniture—Contempt of the present—Oneida Creek—The money motive—Unconscious fraud—Mania and civilisation.

SHORTER STUDIES IN CREDULITY

SOME time ago I came across a theological student who was attending a course of lectures on ancient heresies. He began to be rather troubled about his ordination, because at each lecture he found himself in profound agreement with the particular heresy discussed, and lamented that we had fallen on such dull days that there was now no chance of adopting any of them as his creed. I thought it best to say nothing, feeling it would only still further unsettle him were I to tell him of heresies in our own day quite as weird and abnormal as any in the past. Sadly convinced that this futile modern world of ours harboured no idolatries more monstrous than the worship of that heavy, stupid beast, the golden calf, he passed with a sigh into the safe refuge of the Anglican ministry, and is now among the most orthodox and blameless of our parish clergy.

Had he known that by taking a twopenny tram to a jerry-built London suburb, and by driving slowly past a thousand respectable thirty-pound villas, from the windows of the thousand and first the wild eyes of a heresiarch would have confronted him, I would

not answer for him. Had he felt his tram at last shake itself free of the city man and the man in the street and the man in the villa, and emerging from all this lumber of cheapness and complacency, glide on to the greenest of commons, past a tiny Byzantine church, an inn, thick trees, and a shining pond ; had he seen it finally stopping in sight of a great grey church, with a thin spire, at the top of which was a spear thrust up into the heavens, and below which were four huge monsters, a flying eagle, a man, a lion, and a bull—had he seen all this, I should have trembled for his chances of ordination.

For this is the Ark of the Covenant, opened at Whitsuntide 1895, encrusted with symbolism, its largest window filled with the rising sun, built by the community of the Son of Man, the architects giving their services for nothing, and the labourers being paid in hard cash as the building grew, and here the faithful awaited the coming of the Messiah ; for, as the Jewish temple was God's only temple in all the world, so is this the only building where Christ is fully worshipped. In this temple He will surely appear. So wrote Henry James Prince, founder of the Community of the Son of Man, a society called by all manner of names—Princeites, Lampeter Brethren, Adullamites, Agapemonites.

In 1811, the year of the great comet, in the city of Bath was born a child who, under more favourable circumstances, might have become the founder of a great religious order ; as it was, he became a second John the Baptist to a Messianic Pretender. Prince's childhood had been marked by nothing save illness.

For some years an apothecary's apprentice, he afterwards was appointed medical officer to the General Hospital at Bath. About this time he broke down completely, went to London for an operation, and during the period of convalescence was converted and turned from saving bodies to saving souls. The instrument of this change was a middle-aged and wealthy Roman Catholic, who lodged with his mother, and whom he in turn afterwards converted to Anglicanism and married. Next we hear of him making a great stir as a theological student at Lampeter, where the indifference of both town and college to matters religious amazed him. Here he started a small group among the students, marked by a strict rule of life, by fasting, theological study, and almost incessant prayer, known as the Lampeter Brethren, nucleus of the later sect. His life even before conversion had been exceptionally pure in thought and deed.

Prince's journal, written about this time, is a most interesting document, showing marked originality, as do all his writings. He was evidently influenced by Tersteegen, the German mystic. The journal is strongly Calvinistic. "The world appears to me a moral hospital, and all mankind are patients in it." But he boasts that he has qualified not through books, but at the patient's bedside.

In these pages we come across that hopeless doctrine that calls evil good and good evil, that says no good thing is really good without God's grace, which, being interpreted, means without the doer of goodness having accepted the peculiar dogmas of

Calvin. Occasionally one comes across astounding entries: "I have passed right through the middle of life and come out on the other side into God"; and towards the close, "I am utterly absorbed and swallowed up in God. . . . My life is ended (!) . . . My journal ends."

Before leaving college, he believed himself to have entirely abandoned self-judgment. As Christians of another time immolated the senses, so he had immolated and utterly destroyed his will. He is offered his first curacy. He places himself absolutely in God's hands. His wife dies. Within a few months, "though it was pain and grief to him," he passively obeys what he conceives to be God's voice and marries again, and a small annuity is transferred from the lady to the Abode of Love. He never buttoned a collar, or took out an umbrella, without an appeal to the Almighty.

He became curate of Charlinch, and worked indefatigably. Not the hostility of the beer-drinking, fox-hunting farmers, nor the ridicule of the children, nor the indifference of his absentee invalid rector, moved him in the slightest degree. Always before him was the vision of the flaming pit and the souls of his flock upon the brink. A year passed, and the aspect of things suddenly changed. His bed-ridden rector came across a printed sermon that stirred him to the depths. Inquiring its author, he found it had been preached at Charlinch by his own curate. Within a month he was back at his post, working under him in the Charlinch revival.

Soon the doctrine of the elect began to frighten

the neighbourhood. The refusal of communion to notorious sinners, the terrifying of school children into conversion, the separating of "the sheep from the goats," and certain technical irregularities, led to Prince's deprivation by the Bishop, and after a brief period as curate in another part of England and a repetition of the same offences, he found himself inhibited from pastoral work. At the same time his former rector and convert was silenced, and there was held a hasty meeting of the Lampeter Brethren, resulting in a definite schism from the Church, Prince going first to Brighton and starting Adullam Chapel, and later joining some other of the brethren who had begun to form an "Abode of Love" at Weymouth.

Thus was created the sect of the Son of Man, rapidly spreading along the coast among the secluded villages of Dorset, and converting farmers, labourers, and some few of the more educated classes. Most of its disciples were poor; but the more wealthy, having lands, sold them, and laid the price at Prince's feet. The company of saints crossed the hills into Somersetshire, and there, within a stone's throw of Charlinch, built their now famous Abode of Love. Of this "Abode" the neighbouring villagers speak highly. The Princeites are inoffensive people, who pay their way scrupulously, are generous to their employees, and kind to the poor.

So careful are they not to get into debt that a farmer who served them with milk was alarmed on being requested to send in his bill at the end of the first week. He feared they were dissatisfied, and told their manager that monthly payments were usual.

"You've been here for years. I'm certain of my money." "Not at all," was the reply; "any day we may suddenly go up into the sky with the Lord, and then where would you be?" Overcome by this prospect of impotent tradesmen, bill in hand, storming high heaven for payment, the milkman agreed to a weekly settlement.

For the most part, the men and women live together in spiritual comradeship. There is neither marrying nor giving in marriage. Physical desire is supposed to be a thing of the past. The keynote of life in the community is present perfectibility, immortality (whatever this may mean), and expectancy of the immediate coming of Messiah.

On 7th September 1902, about three years after Prince's death and sixty-five years after the formation of the sect, the Rev. J. Smyth Pigott, who had for some time been pastor of the Ark, proclaimed himself to be the Messiah. Was he a clumsy impostor, who found an easy berth awaiting any Messianic claimant, and tumbled into it? He has had a varied history. University man, cattle driver, seaman, coffee planter, soldier, brilliant raconteur, first-rate boxer, he knocked about the world, eventually taking orders and becoming a curate at Mildmay Park, where he won the respect of his vicar and the devotion of the people. But the routine of the parish cramped him; so we hear of him next as officer in the Salvation Army, returning home late at night bruised and bleeding from the stones of assailants, perfectly good-humoured and generous in thought and deed towards his ignorant opponents. He treats them as friends, and his heart invariably

goes out towards the drunkard and the prostitute and the hooligan. His energy was almost superhuman, his courage stupendous. He seemed to live in what Meredith calls the "rapture of the forward view."

Then he joined the Agapemonites, and his outlook changed. "Don't you ever regret the old strenuous days and our campaign for the sinners?" asked one of his oldest friends. "It was all a mistake," he muttered half to himself. "There was something uncanny about my last interview with him," said this same friend to me; "he sat so silent, nodding his head, and in his eyes was such a far-away look. He didn't seem to see me. He looked through me; and I felt somehow as if I hardly knew if I were talking with a man or a woman, or something that was neither."

Pigott's proclamation of himself as the Messiah was hailed with ridicule, not only by hundreds who read it but by thousands who did not. The scornful attitude of the journalists was not unlike the scornful attitude of the Jews with their contemptuous cry, "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" and predisposed one to a careful study of this curious document. But there is in it no gleam of originality; it suggests the staleness of a conventional mind steeped in the letter of Scripture. It is true that Christ to His Jewish contemporaries quoted the Jewish Bible, and there is no reason why Pigott, had he been a true Messiah, should not have quoted to his Christian contemporaries the Christian Bible; but his particular method of quotation is as dazed and dead as that of Jesus is forcible and vital. His clerical garb, his softness of nature, his reliance on the letter of the past, his failure

to develop its spirit, these traits alone would be sufficient to write him down a kindly and unconscious impostor.

In its most prosperous days, the sect numbered about six hundred persons, and these dwindled to a meagre remnant, many of whom are girls who have been in domestic service. It is curious that since the proclamation, the numbers do not either seem to have increased or decreased.

In view of recent moral scandals at Spaxton, it is interesting to notice that in Prince's days the birth of children, within or without the bonds of wedlock, was considered a sign of sin, while sexual indulgence was apparently not supposed to be sinful in the perfected. Prince writes on one occasion as follows: "The Spirit has cut off from their flesh the evil one, the very essence of that deadly evil in the generative reproductive life current of the human race by which the natural flesh is defiled."

This belief throws some light on the horror with which the birth of a child was regarded in the Agapemone. The mother was expelled from the community, and it may also give some hint of the extraordinary thing which took place in the Abode in presence of all its inmates. In order apparently to prove that the flesh was dead in him, Prince went through some kind of sexual ceremony in public. Eventually a child was born, "the child of shame," and Prince was utterly aghast. His supreme test had broken down. He was still a sinful man. It has been explained to me that as our Lord suffered crucifixion, so to Prince this was the most loathsome thing he

could do. How far Prince or his successor Pigott are the conscious humbugs that such journals as *John Bull* would make them out, it is of course impossible to say. The disciples would not certainly seem to have stood aghast at the recent births in the Agapemone.

That there is a large element of madness in this recent "Messiah" will by now be apparent, and, in one's researches in the strange Byways of Belief, one is continually met by religious monomania.

One gentleman, who writes to me constantly, claims to be "the Fourth Person of the Blessed Trinity," and another, who signs himself "Jehovah God-Amon King Solomon David Jesus," remonstrated with me for having the title "Reverend" on my visiting-card. "No one but the Most High should use that word."

I reminded him gently of his own titles, and suggested something about glass-houses and stones. "That's quite another matter," he replied. "My titles were bestowed upon me by a series of telegrams from heaven. I presume you have no telegram to show?" I felt my case had collapsed, and changed the subject.

In the course of my adventures into the darker and little trodden paths of credulity, I have become used to many astonishing spiritual phenomena, yet I must confess to a certain amazement when I read the list of extraordinary religions given in the census of the British Empire, issued by the Local Government Board. With Buddhists, Mohammedans, and Hindus one is more or less familiar; have not the Hindus recently sent a mission to Newcastle to convert the

ignorant Christians, as they consider us, and to guide out feet in the way of Indian peace? And with the Ambrosians, Cosmosophists, Alexandrians, Antinomians, Separatists, Primitive Animists, and Reincarnationists, with all these, too, one may perhaps claim a bowing acquaintance, while a smattering of Greek will tempt one to a pretty shrewd guess about the creed of the Hylozoist.

But the Tipon puzzled me. Is he related to that equally mysterious creature the Sung Quong? Or is he nearer in faith to what the census gives as a Calathumpian? It is some consolation to know that if one were dissatisfied with the Tiponian faith, one might become a Thesian, a Tunker, or a Hoke.

It may be that when a census is taken, many persons find themselves with definite religious beliefs but no definite religious labels, and so invent them on the spur of the moment, sometimes for fun, but more often in a genuine desire to describe themselves accurately. This may explain such terms as Believer in Christ and Christian Freethinker. Many queer names are explained by the fact that the empire covers not only the Christian Religion, with its thousands of sectarian offshoots, but Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Hinduism, with their tens of thousands of remote sectaries, a fact which may very well account for Sung Quongs, Hokes, and Tipons.

The Dipper and the Canopist are more comprehensible, although the former sounds like a bird and the latter like a balloonist. But the Dipper is, in reality, one of the countless sects of immersionists, who stick to the letter of Scripture and deny salvation

to anyone who has not been baptized by dipping into the water; while the Canopist may possibly be a more imposing title for the person commonly known as the "Blue Domer," who prefers Sunday bicycling to Sunday church-going, and holds that God may be as effectually worshipped under the blue dome of heaven as under the dome of St Paul's.

His roof is the canopy of the stars. One may sympathise with the Canopist, although, as a matter of fact, he sometimes forgets to worship at all, and invariably forgets that the best worship is not individual nor separate, but corporate and brotherly.

The Millennial Dawnists are first cousins to the Baxterites and Christadelphians, who believe that the end of the world, like the penny gaff, is always just about to commence, and that they will enjoy an earthly paradise for a thousand years while the unregenerate are having a peculiarly nasty time of it.

There figure in the census the Zion Christian Catholics. These are, of course, the sometime followers of the notorious "Profit" Dowie who, on the occasion of his manifestation as Elijah the Third, produced a pair of wings, and, strapping them on to his shoulders, proclaimed that the power of the Spirit was upon him. But the only flight the poor old prophet accomplished was the tragic flight from the city he had built, on his deposition by his sometime worshippers. Zion City, with its glories of healing, its "female choir of white-robed seraphim," its "anti-hog factory," where soap is boiled without pig's fat in obedience to a divine command, is left to mourn its king's disgrace and death.

The Conditional Immortalists are a more prosaic sect who believe all men to be naturally mortal, and a select few unnaturally immortal, on condition of their accepting certain peculiar doctrines about Christ.

Pelagians figure in the list. Are these descendants in an unbroken spiritual line from the Welsh bishop of the Middle Ages, or a new sect that claims his doctrine? Pelagius disbelieved in original sin, and believed most emphatically in his original self. The power of man's will was his supreme doctrine, and had he lived now he would have been a follower of Bernard Shaw, or Shaw of him, except that neither of them would think of following anybody but himself.

The Hornerites are disciples of R. C. Horner, the Canadian, who, being expelled from the Methodists, founded "the Holiness Church," built a hundred chapels, would have liked to have burnt an equal number of dancing-saloons, opposed bazaars as works of Satan, preached Quakerism, and practised Puritanism.

The list is by no means complete, but, for all its incompleteness, is a voluminous document. It makes no reference, for instance, to a sect of Breathers, whose existence was revealed to me in an A. B. C. restaurant some years ago. I was engaged upon the unexciting repast provided in such establishments, and strangely enough—for this was no tavern where one looks for conversation and good-fellowship—my neighbour spoke to me. His remark may have been a request for salt or an imprecation on the weather, but it

startled me, and when I answered him, a secret bond seemed to unite us, for we must have felt like guilty Trappists who had broken their rule. He was a small man, with a sandy moustache, watery eyes, and an indecisive tie; he wore a bowler and a ready-made suit. At first our conversation was commonplace enough, but presently I happened to take up an evening paper, and my eye caught a curious headline, "Salvation by Breathing." No doubt the words with which I drew his attention to it were unnecessarily flippant; he became abnormally grave; he seemed to pull himself together; his eyes looked for the first time as if they saw things, and he said: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and no one can tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth; so is everyone who is born of the outbreathing of the Deity." Pulling out of his pocket a tattered pamphlet, he began to read:—

"Right breathing is an infallible remedy. Inbreathe the Infinite, using the words I am Money, if you wish to be opulent; or, I am Success, or I am Whole, or, best of all, I am Love. Never mind what the trouble is—just chop it square off with this practice. Lie down flat on your back on the floor, arms extended, eyes raised; inhale slowly, breathe rhythmically, and realise the great I am."

Most things have something to do with religion, and I have no doubt whatever that there is a sacrament of breathing; but it is this isolation of one little factor of life, and the concentration there, that invariably marks the credulous. Credulity is a kind of hole-and-corner faith; nor does such a faith affect anything but the byways of personality. A more Catholic belief—if it be really Catholic and really

belief, and not the mere make-beliefs of conventionalists who call themselves Catholic—would spread along the highway of a man's life, filling every nook and cranny of his being. It would alter the cut of his clothes, and change the colour of his necktie, and the expression of his face would be different, and his desirable mansion at Upper Tooting, with its showy furniture, would be a heap of dust and ashes.

For one thing is noticeable in connection with all these holders of queer faiths. Lace curtains shade the front windows of them all ; frail tables of bamboo support the same unhappy indiarubber plants in the front parlours of them all, and all consider a naked flower-pot as indecent a sight as the naked human body ; the one they cover with unspeakable tissue-paper, the other with unspeakable clothes. The wool mats and antimacassars of the Plumstead Peculiar differed in no respect from the antimacassars and wool mats of the Walworth Jumper. For some months the Jezreelites gathered themselves together in a sort of gasometer at Chatham that should serve them as a city of refuge against the great and terrible day ; and the New Motorists constructed a huge machine, which was to resemble man so closely that it could even beget little motor machines—and the mob smashed it. But New Motorists and Jezreelites ultimately dispersed to the self-same style of home, and resumed monotonously kindred occupations. Japanese fans and shop-made fretwork, matchwood imitation tables, and muddy wallpapers figured with terra-cotta cauliflowers—or monstrous unnameable

flowers like cabbages—appeal to the souls of all alike. Their dress is a copy and their furniture—a lie. By their furniture ye shall know them.

Another, though not so invariable, mark of credulity is its contempt of the present. Its motto might be taken from *Alice in Wonderland*—jam yesterday, jam to-morrow, but never jam to-day. A sane and robust religion builds on realities, and believes in to-day; the Now is divine, for Now is the accepted time, Now is the day of salvation; but most superstitions live exclusively in the past or in the future.

Credulous people generally either believe in a dead lion being better than a living dog, or that a bird in the bush is worth two in the hand; and here, again, it is not so much their friendship with dead lions or with problematic birds that is unfortunate, as their contempt for the contemporary sparrow and the dog in the street. Of the two, one cannot help feeling that the faith that sights the future is more fascinating than the faith that lives in the past. Oneida Creek is infinitely preferable to the Nazarine Ecclesia, Brixton. Mr Mist, of the Brixton Ecclesia, apparently believes himself to belong to a lost tribe of the House of Israel; he seems to identify England with that lost tribe, and he thinks that man is not immortal, that there is no Trinity, that auto-immersion is the only true baptism, and Saturday the only true Sabbath. Members of this Church call themselves Biblearians. They move about slowly on texts, as cripples move on crutches. They have done good work. One of them protests with some vigour against

the Spurgeonian doctrine that "Hell is a place where immortal souls are jingling the burning-irons of their torment amidst the shrieks of tortured ghosts"; but the religion of the Sixtieth Century Ephraim College, in the vanguard of the Nazarine Ecclesia, Brixton, is unattractive and somewhat ungraceful, because its members bury themselves under a ruin of precedents and worship a God who has gone out of the world.

More fascinating are the spiritual adventures of men like Noyes, of Oneida Creek, who endeavour, not only to forecast but to secure the future. The religion of his followers may be described as evangelical communism; their creed is too elaborate, and of too much importance to be inserted at the tail of a chapter; but their founder was determined that the future should be on the side of this belief. By a careful system of mating, under strict supervision of the community, he believed that a kind of spiritual overman might be produced; the children of such unions would be so sane and strong in mind and body that they would naturally turn to the communistic faith of their fathers. What was the result of this scheme? The children, I believe some twenty to thirty in number, were exceptionally developed both mentally and physically — the women were like Amazons—but all except one deserted their founder's creed. So far as this experiment goes, it therefore appears credulous to believe that you can deliberately breed a particular kind of spiritual man; nevertheless, Oneida has contributed a most valuable chapter to the history of Eugenics.

It is easy to dismiss all queer developments of faith as being the work of charlatans, but, as a matter of fact, there seems to be but an infinitesimal amount of conscious fraud among the prophets of credulity. No doubt the love of money occasionally figures among the complex motives of sect-builders. The supreme habitation of the philosophers of the living fire of the western world do not, at any rate, leave it out of account. They have issued a letter to certain distinguished men in this country, in which they cordially invite them to "become one of us." The letter reminds them that you cannot buy secrets in the open market :—

"The four Grand Rabboni who have in their custody the Sacred Manuscript have agreed in secret council to accept you. . . . We hope you will not disappoint the high expectations we entertain of you, for we wish to invest you with the powers of a Deputy Grand Rabboni . . . to confer degrees . . . for which you will receive a portion of the initiation fees. We stand for everything that is good, pure, and noble."

If one suggests that to be credulous is to be possessed by one only idea, some people scornfully reply that there are plenty of monomaniacs in and out of asylums, and why write about them? But, even supposing the criticism were not absurdly exaggerated, I sometimes wonder which are the madder moments of the victim of credulity and—if you like—of insanity? The moment when he fancies himself Emperor of Germany, a vegetable marrow, the Messiah; or the moment he shares with ourselves, who live on the level of beasts that perish under top-

hats and encased in futile clothing and secondhand beliefs? Is it only our manias that keep us sane?—only because behind the stupid mask of drawing-room civilisation there lurks that splendid, incalculable mad monster—the human soul?

THE CATHOLIC HARVEST

Not a *via media* —The proportion of faith—Good Catholic digestion—Diversity in unity—Intrusionism—Logic of heresies—The Church agnostic—Mystery not mystification—Catholic adventures of thought—Official intolerance—Democratic authority—Apollinarius and the Council—Kernel of creeds—Virgin Birth and Incarnation—Fact versus truth—Irruptionist infidelity—Uses of tradition—A short exposition of the Creed—Personality, sex, and anthropomorphism of God—His necessity—Maker of heaven and earth—Man's destiny and God's responsibility—God's limitation—Progress—The naturalism of Jesus—The single life—Persons not ethics—The Gospel of the Kingdom—Gaiety and grace—The Gracious Land—Saviour-Destroyer—A difficult path and an easy yoke—Very Man of Very Man—With authority—Gaiety of saints—Vibia Perpetua and Francis of Assisi—God's Jugglers—Nature and grace—Moral evolution—Living nature—Only son—Virgin Birth—Crucifixion—Value of the Death—Descent into Hell—Resurrection and Ascension—The Holy Ghost—The Holy Church—Communion of Saints—Forgiveness of sins—Resurrection of the flesh—Death and life—Heaven.

THE CATHOLIC HARVEST

THE Catholic Faith is proportioned and inclusive ; it has been sometimes called a *via media* but the term is not entirely fortunate, because it suggests cautious steering between extremes, a timidity which has in it little of the Catholic spirit. Catholicism does not so much avoid the crude enthusiasms of this or that heresy, but is their complement. It understands their affirmations and refuses only to understand their limitations. It has nothing in common with the cautious invalid, but partakes freely of the varied banquet of life, and is blessed with a good digestion. It has nothing in common with that kind of undenominationalism that tries to come at unity by ignoring diversities ; it boldly accepts and appreciates the diversities and gets its rich and robust unity by proportioning them. Christian Science affirms the spirituality of the world and denies its materiality. Materialism affirms the value of the senses and denies the existence of powers which Christian Science affirms. The Spiritualists affirm the existence of an extended life, and are over-inclined to next-worldliness. The Secularists seek to extract the inner values of this life, and deny that extended life which Spiritism

affirms. The Tolstoyans appreciate love and peaceableness and self-negation, while the Nietzscheans emphasise the importance of self-expression and valour. The Popular Determinists insist upon plan and destiny, while the Pelagians and their modern followers urge spontaneity and the energy of the individual. These contrasts might be extended *ad infinitum*. The Church appreciates the positive elements in all, rejecting only their spirit of rejection and denying their denials.

At present the battle rages between Immanentists and Intrusionists, between those who realise the presence of God in the ordinary life of the world while they depreciate the idea of cataclysm and sudden divine intrusions, and those who recognise a "nature red in tooth and claw" and the corruptions of men, and regard revelation as what has been called a series of irruptions¹ into a world alienated from the Spirit of God.

Here, again, the Catholic Church boldly affirms that God is really present in the core of things, for in Him all things consist; but equally does it affirm the presence of evil, and the cruelties and stupidities of men, the sudden outpourings and inrushes of God's Spirit, and the cataclysmic upheavals of the world.

It has been said that logic is the vice of little minds, and certainly the little logic of the heresies is a dangerous thing. The Church seeks, and to some extent succeeds in gaining, a constructive and comprehensive view of the world, but refuses to closure

¹ Cf. Antony James, "Irruptionism and Infidelity," *Church Socialist Quarterly*, 1910.

any of the evidence. The Determinists, Materialists, and Christian Scientists, are too impatient to get a smooth solution of all mysteries, and, ignoring this or that group of facts, are able to present their little explanation which explains nothing. The Church is content to seem illogical, and even to affirm apparent contradictions, rather than let go one particle of the truth. It knows that men are not the sons of the Devil, as Puritans would sometimes seem to suggest. It knows equally well that men often behave like devils, which Positivists and New Theologians sometimes come near denying; heretics will have it that there are no mysteries, and seek to explain everything in their little rounded systems. The Church suggests a solution, but values its own philosophic solution far less than the vital, though seemingly contradictory, truths that it endeavours to solve.

The heretic is often as big a fool as the plain man who insists on the plain answer, Yes or No, and does not even see the complexities of the world in which he lives. I sometimes think that the Church is the only really agnostic body; it is convinced of many things, but admits the mysteries and the limitations of its knowledge. And by mystery I do not mean mystification, for the Church seeks to enlighten men and not mystify them; but out of the experience of the ages it affirms that there are certain truths by which men live, which, whether you can resolve them or not into an immediate harmony, are to be believed and practised on peril of certain present—and perhaps future—damnation. So far from wishing to mystify mankind, the Catholic faith encourages mental energy

and searching inquiry. Henry Sidgwick, who was admittedly no friend of the Christian Church, told me that he had held the popular and contemptuous view of theologians until certain researches brought him into contact with the work of the schoolmen, and that he had not found such vigour and clarity of thought among modern scientists as he found in their controversial writings. True enough, Church officialdom has often been as intolerant of free-thought as the heretics themselves, and as cruel in its suppression of free-thinkers as any Puritan, but such acts of intolerance are the expression of an autocracy which is inconsistent with the Catholic spirit.

In some quarters it is popular to suppose that Catholic dogmas are arbitrary degrees of a clique of theologians or of the Pope, capriciously imposed upon men's consciences by these alien authorities. This may or may not be true of modern papalism; it is grotesquely untrue of the clauses of the creeds universally accepted by Christendom. Take, for instance, such dogmas as the true manhood of Jesus. Apollinarius denied that Christ was truly human. He was not arbitrarily condemned by alien authorities. The question had been argued for years in Christendom; it had been the storm-centre of human thought, and had evoked the freest and most vital controversies. This energetic clash of mental energies resulted in definition at a council called together from all parts of the civilised world.

The agnostic of to-day may be contemptuous of what he calls the hair-splitting irrelevancies of Church councils; the question at issue seems to him childish

and ridiculous, but that is merely because he is a ridiculous child. If he would read the literature of the subject he would discover that the Church was contending for the very truth that lies nearest his own heart. Athanasius and Hilary went beneath the Apollinarian conclusion, which denied Christ's humanity, and to the Apollinarian foundation on which it rested. Apollinarius admitted with them that a certain being called Jesus of Nazareth was God, but denied that, being God, He could also be man, for he held the essential vileness of human nature; the orthodox theologians struck at the fundamental heresy, and insisted that, however far gone from original righteousness our nature might be, it was in essence good and fundamentally divine. The final decision satisfied the reason of the civilised world, and was a humanist triumph against inhuman assumptions.

What is wanted in our day is an exposition of the Christian creeds which will penetrate beneath the surface conclusions expressed in their clauses to the vital reasoning on which these conclusions rest. The mere denial or assertion of the external fact of the Virgin Birth matters nothing in comparison with the eternal truth underlying it. Many people would closure all discussion along these lines, by threatening to abandon their faith, if even the "virgin birth" or "the empty tomb" were disproved; but the question must seriously be asked: Have these people any faith to abandon? The Bishop of Birmingham labours mightily to prove that even scientists admit the possibilities of parthenogenesis, for it occurs among

insects. To quote from an article in the *Church Socialist Quarterly*¹:—

“What a Catholic triumph! Safeguarding the divinity of virgin-born insects as against the mere manhood, stupid, dull, and undivine, of ordinary men and women. I often wonder what the irruptionist conception of God is? Would they have thronged about the Christ and jostled against Him without ever suspecting that He was Godlike and supremely adorable, until someone assured them He was born in an extraordinary way, and that His body was destined for a levitation into sky? What is God, then? That which is peculiar and goes up? Or was there not something about the Galilean to drag from the very hearts of simple folk the conviction, ‘Never man spake like this man,’ to assure them that they were in the presence of a divinely Human Being, who spoke with authority, and not as the mumbling, bookish, second-rate inhuman scribes? Would the irruptionists have believed that there was everything divinely delightful in Jesus, or could they not have been persuaded until one rose from the dead? Dr Figgis rather confuses the issue. He groups together the peculiar birth, the availing death, the empty tomb. But crucifixion in itself is not availing, nor is it any proof whatsoever of divinity, nor are the virgin-births of animalculæ, nor even the levitations of a yogi. What are the divine values behind the supposed phenomena?

“And criticism such as mine does not deny the occurrences. It merely minimises their importance and suggests that belief in the eternal values of the

¹ Antony James on “Irruptionists,” *Church Socialist Quarterly*.

Catholic faith is not dependent upon them. I believe that the soldier at the foot of the Cross was ignorant of the past peculiar birth, and of the coming empty tomb, and yet cried out from the depths of his being, 'Truly this man was the Son of God!' For him, at least, the Catholic faith, without its scaffolding, would have been something to live by and something to die for. Ordinary men, perhaps Dr Figgis would say, need certain external assurances, and cannot feel or respond to the divine unless they are stunned into acceptance of it by the extraordinary and the gapingly miraculous. But the soldier was ordinary and very human. What kind and quality of belief is engendered by the extraordinary and magical? The demons believe and tremble. The demons are compelled by events to the fidelity of infidels."

If traditional literalism must be avoided on the one hand, we must, on the other hand, steer clear of irresponsible individualism. Convictions of persons who have deliberately cut themselves adrift from tradition, and are contemptuous of the conclusions of others, are comparatively worthless. It is the irresponsibility of "free-thought" that destroys its value as thought and makes one suspicious of its freedom, and so one comes back to the point suggested in my opening chapter, namely, that dogmas must neither be used as strait-jackets for humanity, nor cast aside as the contemptible conventions of questionable authority. They must be inwardly digested as the vitalising forces which build up the whole personality, which is now able to forget them and to go forward to new adventures of thought and life.

I have here, in the pages that follow, attempted a short exposition of the Creed along the lines suggested. It must of course be taken as the roughest of sketches, the finished picture would require volumes. It will suggest in brief outline the Catholic Faith by which many of us live, and forgetting which we sink into a dullness as prosy as that of any heretic. My interpretation is for the most part based upon the conclusions of orthodoxy, and in no part is it without the support of some one or other school of Catholic thought. What I have here tried to seize upon is the emotional standpoint of the Church, as against the emotional standpoint of the heresies ; in the case of each clause to crack the shell and come at the kernel.

I BELIEVE IN GOD, THE FATHER ALMIGHTY

God is Life. He has neither beginning nor end, but is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever ; the soul of everything ; path and goal ; beginning, middle and end, without whom

“Nought soever is,
Nor was afore, nor e'er shall be,
Nor any other joy than His
Wish I for mine to comfort me.”

The Personality of God.—The universe is the language He speaks, limited as is all language, but actually, though inadequately, expressing and meaning and spelling God.

To interpret God in terms of the universe is wisdom, but always with the reservation that He transcends it. The inadequacy of the means of communication does not justify men in a refusal to speak

to each other. Nor does the inadequacy of correspondence between God and man justify a denial of the possibility of such correspondence.

Perhaps the vegetable interprets God in vegetable terms, plus anything greater than vegetable towards which it vaguely reaches. Perhaps for the beetle God's incarnation will be in terms of insect life, plus this same forward aspiration, but man will feel out towards God in terms of a far-reaching human aspiration. God is at least personal and anthropomorphic. To deny this is to think of Him as less, not more, than our furthest aspiration and His total output. To limit Him to humanity, though stupid, could not be so great a blunder.

God is Father, Mother, Brother, Sister. Jewish theology, from the loins of which Christendom sprang, has expressed God in terms of the male. That we have come to identify Jesus of Nazareth with God encourages this masculine conception. Later, the necessity of intellectual and emotional expansion which should include woman resulted in increasing worship of Mary, the Mother of God.¹

The Tri-Unity.—God is not, nor ever was, solitary separate, alone. God's oneness is better presented by the rich unity of the chord than by the meagre unit of the single note. God is the perfect harmony whence all proceeds and whither all things tend.

The Creating God.—God is making the universe

¹ My rule here is never to break with traditional forms of expression, and this consideration, coupled with the fact that custom regards man as creative and active and woman as receptive and passive (a view exaggerated yet roughly valid), leads me to retain the prefix He. No orthodox theologian would deny the maternal element in God, but the expression Father-Mother is a little cumbersome.

which is being formed day by day out of His own substance.

Our world is a fragment of the universe. He is the Soul of this world who is also Soul of stars and planets, of sun and moon and everything, whose dwelling is

“The light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man
A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.”

Almighty God and Necessity.—The term almighty was added as against certain heretics who affirmed God to be limited by conditions of matter outside His control. God is under necessity. Power is not capricious. Absolute power is absolutely under necessity, a necessity not indeed external to itself, for there would be a limit to its absolutism, but imposed from within by its own consistent and invariable nature. God cannot lie, cannot alter reality, cannot deny Himself, is hedged about on this side and on that by His own innate and righteous impulse.

God's Necessity to Create.—As an artist is bound to produce his work, and a prophet cries: “Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel,” God is bound to reproduce Himself in innumerable conscious, loving, willing, imaginative, sentient beings. Creation or self-expression implies definition and limitation and sacrifice. This paradox of self-expression and self-sacrifice is the paradox of God's nature and property as Artist of the Universe.

MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

Here is the answer of the creeds to docetists and Christian Scientists. Both the inward and the spiritual (the heaven) and the outward and material (the earth) are the outcome of God.

JESUS CHRIST HIS ONLY SON OUR LORD

Man's Destiny.—Man is destined to be the very fullest expression of God, and to be one with Him through a development of will, sympathy, and imagination. The seeds of these divine faculties are discoverable among animals, are more strikingly present in the half-beast, half-human we know to-day as man, but can only reach maturity in the over-man, the man that is to be, the Son of Man. It has been said that the soul sleeps in the vegetable, dreams in the animal, awakes in the man. If God had been a manufacturer of machines instead of a Maker of men, He could have produced a perfect world on machine-made lines, but in that case He would not have expressed Himself wholly. The end in view was the creation of living beings with the timeless faculties of the timeless God, who, by exercise of their own innate will, should grow to divine fullness and find their way home to Him. After ages of experience, wandering through the wilderness of death and undergoing the discipline of pain and happiness, they discover the source of life, and in that discovery gain their own personality. Discovering that source, they renounce the isolation in which they fancied their life consisted, and coming into union with Him and with all living

creatures, they conquer time and space; living in their source and goal they become one with the infinite, and themselves infinite, being urged forward by that

“Boundless hunger of the immortals
Which only God’s infinitude supplies.”

Born partly blind, men grope with blundering efforts towards happiness, health, life, possessing the seedling will to live, but not knowing wherein life consists. God looks with piteous eye upon these blind efforts to satisfy the instinctive craving for what is, did they but know it, eternal life.

The limitations of the creature groping towards humanity, the absence of light and life in him, which lead him to turn aside after false gods, are *evil*. Evil can be expressed as the difference between man as he appears at any given moment and man as he is in God’s ideal, as he must become in the future—*i.e.* as he essentially is.

Although evil in itself is best expressed by negatives—as want of life, or falling short of a mark—each individuality has been given possibilities of more or less spontaneity and can, by exercise of his embryo will, gain larger fields of initiative. Inertia and the refusal to exercise such will as he possesses, or its exercise in the direction of death, are the positive sins which flow from negative evil. We try to find our life in things that can only yield death. Our mistakes are numberless, but have their only source in that negation, that want of life, which we call evil.

God is not the author of evil, if evil be some positive and created thing; and if evil be a gap or

absence, it would seem futile and inaccurate to speak of the author of that which is not.

That God is responsible for that want of life has sometimes been held, but in every case He gives to each sufficient capacity for life, though the capacity may vary with the individual.

The determinists, who are responsible for the mother's-apron-strings theory of humanity, ask: "Could not God prevent the child bruising itself and keep it safe from harm?" Of course He could, and the result would be a creature unable to fend for itself. The trying for itself is all-important. The limbs of our will, our imagination, our sympathy, can only grow by exercise.

But could not God vouchsafe man all the sweets of victory without the toil and sweat of battle, and yet evolve by such a process some sort of man? Who can tell? In all probability this would be impossible to the God who cannot lie, and cannot deny Himself, and is bound by the limitations of sanity. The popular determinists in their pessimistic despair of a world they consider helpless, seem to have issued an ultimatum that unless God can be proved as great a lunatic as themselves, they will not worship Him. They cannot realise that God's very sanity is the factor that hedges, and prevents, and limits Him.

They are not usually atheists, but agnostics, *i.e.* men who, at least, admit the possibility of extended life beyond death; but, being insane, they refuse to take into their consideration the hypothesis of this extended life, which might make everything clear to them.

Progress.—Some liken the course of affairs to the

course of a wheel, fixed in the same spot but spinning round. Others expect continuous progress; but the advance of human kind, or of its individual units, may be the advancing tide whose waves recede only for further advance.

The shell, dragged back by the receding wave, may well think in terms of retrogression; so it may be with men living in back-wash periods of history. Man can use his defeats as well as his victories as factors in progress, for he is the child of a God who brings good out of evil.

"Did we think victory great? Well, now, it seems to me, when it cannot be helped, that defeat is great and that death and dismay are great."¹

And in Jesus Christ.—From the loins of humanity itself springs the Saviour of men. Out of the heart of the human race comes the promise of victory, for Jesus is the First Fruits; after that, the harvest. Jesus is the bridge between earth and heaven, for He proclaims to men that they are Very God of Very God, and that their Father in heaven, who is so careful of the type, is not careless of the single life. This world, a mere speck of dust on Nature's face, teems with millions of sentient beings, and God regards not the minuteness of the being but its infinite potentiality, for—

"Nothing walks with aimless feet;
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void
When God has made the pile complete."

Jesus is the pledge that human nature is inherently divine, and that evil is sub-natural.

¹ Walt Whitman.

Persons, not Ethics.—The Christian conception may be given in a phrase: "Morality was made for man, not man for morality." It is impossible to obey abstract rules; it is possible to worship and to love actual persons, and, thus motivated, to fulfil all rules. St Paul speaks of the rules being our footmen who accompany us to the school of Christ. Jesus does not impose an alien rule upon His servants, but manifests an inner life to His sons.

The Gospel of the Kingdom.—The Kingdom of God as He preached it, was a genial, gracious city of good fellowship which had within it the spontaneity and gaiety of a little child. It was not the Kingdom as preached by the sombre, splendid, law-keeping John the Baptist, and had in it little of the law of the Jews, or the duty of the moderns. Its colour was taken from the country of Jesus, a land of fruits and fresh streams, of gentle winds, and rich hills, of apples, walnuts, and pomegranates, and as Jesus Himself reminds us, a land of excellent wines. The Gospel of the Kingdom was preached in a well-peopled land where poverty was not of the accursed, but the blessed, order, and where people did not need to be too anxious about the morrow, but who, like their glorious birds and flowers, could live the life of to-day with grace and without worry. It was the bridegroom preaching to the sons of the bride-chamber, the shepherd piping upon the hills of Galilee—preaching a veritable gospel of joy, for always the Kingdom of Heaven was in the midst of men if only they had ears to hear and eyes to see.

Why quarrel and be suspicious one of another,

when you are all God's family? The Shepherd and the Bridegroom and the Prince of Peace was also the Warrior and the Destroyer, for men loved darkness rather than light, and would hinder their brethren from entering into life. Once the secret is learned, the yoke is easy and the burden light; but there are few who care to learn it, and the pearls were often cast before swine.

Yet deep down in the heart of things Jesus and the rest of mankind are at one, for the Catholic doctrine opposed by Marcion, "that great, though one-sided thinker who dared to assert that the God of Jesus was a stranger to man,"¹ teaches "that God and man, if they really can have any intercourse together, must have a common atmosphere," so multitudes of ordinary folks were moved to cry out, "Never man spake as this man." "He speaks with authority and not as the scribes."

It is this natural grace of Jesus which points us to the innate gracefulness of mankind wherever it reaches the full stature of manhood, for the Son of Man is full of humour and comeliness and joy, and His sons and daughters have the like nature. Take for example of this natural grace and beauty and spontaneity the records of the early martyrs,² and particularly the story of Vibia Perpetua, torn from her child and in prison awaiting trial. Hardest to bear were the entreaties of her old father, who at last went down on his knees, crying out to her to spare them the shame, calling her no longer *filia*, but

¹ Cf. Burkitt, *Failure of Liberal Christianity*.

² Cf. such accounts as are to be found in A. J. Mason's *Historic Martyrs of the Primitive Church* (Longmans, 10s. 6d.).

domina. God granted her visions. There was a ladder of beaten gold; at its foot was a terrible dragon, and as she went up she trampled upon him, and, climbing, found herself in a garden, and there stood before her a white-bearded man in shepherd's garb, and he milked his goats and made cheese of the milk, and gave her to eat; and, "with our hands joined, we did eat, and when we had eaten we said Amen!" So she understood they were to suffer. Again in a vision she saw the arena, but she was stripped and turned into a boy, escorted by comely young fellows. She was rubbed with oil as an athlete. Against her came a terrible negro; but she saw also the splendid master of gladiators, with beautiful shoes upon his feet, and in his hand a green branch of golden apples, a prize to be given to the conqueror; and she fought the negro, who was in reality the Devil, and smote him and vanquished him, and received the green branch of golden apples. When the day of her martyrdom came, she described it as a day of mirth. After she had been tossed by wild bulls, so unconscious and entranced was she that she said: "I cannot tell when we are to be taken out to that cow." The Church's name for Vibia Perpetua is "the darling of God."

The saints are not copies but originals. They are living illustrations of the Spirit of the Supreme Man, not mere imitators of His example. One would not think so to read the *Fioretti*, and many people only know St Francis through the mediumship of the decadent *Flowers*, as they only know other Christian saints through other pious but unsaintly biographies.

Among atheists and agnostics you will find many honest and generous men and women, but it is to the religious, and especially to the Catholic faith, that we must turn if we want the great heroic types. It is Francis of Assisi, Vibia Perpetua, Joan of Arc, Thomas More, Thomas Becket, Katharine of Siena—these are the people who turn the world upside down. They are no mawkish imitators of a dead God, but incarnations of a living God, daring everything, moving mountains, turning the moon into blood, achieving the impossible—and by virtue of the innate and natural and irresistible grace of the divine spirit. He who associates the saints with stained-glass ineptitudes and drawing-room piosity had better read the letters of Katharine of Siena or the speeches of Thomas of Canterbury. In an hour when the church seems to have rotted into nothingness, there arises the wool-dyer's child at Siena, and the civilised world is remade. Katharine, "daughter of the republic," "child of the people," thunders anathemas against the Holy Father at Avignon, and once more Rome becomes the seat of the papacy, and the dry bones of the Church come together and the flesh appears and the Catholic Church is rejuvenated. She writes to Urban at Avignon, "God will utterly purge His Church. Without fail He will cut away all the rotten wood of the tree and will plant it again in a manner of His own."

This "child of the people," this "little daughter of the republic," was the counsellor of kings and cardinals, of the nations and the Holy See. She preached to infuriated mobs and made of mobs a

people; she toiled among plague-stricken thousands; she harangued the republic of Florence and swayed its policies, and ever on her lips and on her heart was the ideal of "Holy Justice." Her advice to Urban was, "Better abdicate if you cannot rule." She insisted that only "a scorching repentance" could save the Church. She won her power by herself trampling down her own early temptations to impurity, and instead of becoming a Pharisee or a prude, she became the free and outspoken friend of men, both old and young. On the day of her death, April 29th, 1380, there was universal lamentation; but the lamentation was turned into joy when Europe began to feel the presence of this free and joyous woman stirring among its sons and daughters, and the Church did well to place in the bright month of May the feast of so entirely natural and happy a creature, the companion and lover of birds and beasts and flowers, of men and women and little children.

I have spoken of these saints as illustrations of the entirely natural, for St Paul's terminology about nature and grace is by no means the last word in Catholic casuistry; it has sometimes been conjectured that the struggle for existence led certain animals to group themselves together and to hunt in herds. Along with this instinct of self-preservation and self-advancement is found that other social instinct which is described in Prince Krapotkine's *Mutual Aid among Animals*.

If at first man was a superior type of herding animal, directing his bodily energies into constructive channels under the control of his emerging mind, he was at the same time developing within the bounds of

his tribe those more spiritual faculties to which tribal conditions were favourable. From this charity which began within the home of the tribe he reaches out to a larger charity, a sense of justice, fellowship, kinship with a larger world, still struggling for life, he lets go much that once seemed to him life, that he may gain the fuller life in harmony with his fellows. Jesus Christ and the saints and leaders of divine movements, consciously Christian or not, gave a meaning and a tongue and a lively direction to these struggles for full or eternal life, and men began to perceive the unity of all life in God. This spiritual perception is as natural to man, when he has come into his human nature, as was the cruder struggle for self-preservation in an earlier period. It is the struggle for the deeper, cosmic self, the old struggle carried forward, with those instincts which favoured it, not discarded but transmuted and controlled, and used for service. Grace, then, is opposed to ape and tiger nature, and is another name for the human nature into which the saviours of men would bring us.

There are passages in Scripture and in the history of the saints which suggest the unity of all sentient beings and what has been called a "cosmic consciousness." And if we reject that materialism which resolves the world into a heap of dead atoms, and that spiritualism which denies the objectivity of a world exterior to ourselves, we must come to the belief that the objects exterior to man, which impress him and come, by means of the senses, into relationship with him, must be in some sense of like nature

with him. If the "self" is impressed, is it unlikely that the impressors should also be living "selves"? The impressions of an external world made through our sensory organs are really so many telegraphic messages from countless beings who are perpetually endeavouring to communicate with us. We and they are related. We are interdependent selves who all alike live and move and have our being in the great world-consciousness whom theology calls God, the ground of all being, and the final cause of all creation.

Disregarding this cosmic consciousness, warring against grace and against fellowship, man wars against himself and his proper nature.

His Only Son Our Lord.—This clause was added, not to exclude other men from divine sonship but to exclude a current heresy to the effect that Jesus Christ was one of many non-human supernatural beings who acted as mediums between heaven and earth.

WHO WAS CONCEIVED OF THE HOLY GHOST, BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY

The emphasis in this clause is not upon the virginity of Mary, but the actuality of the fleshly birth. It was a clause directed against the docetism of the agnostics, who despised the flesh and taught the vileness of human nature. The meaning of the phrase is therefore *actually born* of a woman whom all admitted to be "the Virgin Mary." Her virginity was not in question: His humanity was.

SUFFERED, ETC.

As against certain ancients who held that He was a Spirit too perfect to suffer and to die, except in seeming. This clause, of course, makes it impossible for Christian Scientists to claim the name Christian.

WAS CRUCIFIED, ETC.

Here, again, is witnessed that perfect balance of truth, that appreciation of the position of those who insist that life is gay and joyous and swift-footed, with the appreciation that it is by much tribulation that men enter it. And that the way of the Cross is smoothed and the burdens lightened by the pioneers who have died that we may live.

HE DESCENDED INTO HELL

This clause does not appear in the Apostles' Creed before about 400 A.D., and very various interpretations have been put upon it. Its spiritual significance would seem to be that the power of love and heroism in this Very Man of Very Man leaps the barriers of death, and can drag from the bottomless pit the very souls of the damned.

THE THIRD DAY HE ROSE, ETC.

The undisputed fact is that men broken and defeated and disbanded are found in a very short time filled with strength and exultation, and revolutionising the world in what they believe to be the spirit and presence of the living Christ. The Resurrection as an historic fact can now neither be subject

to absolute proof, or absolute disproof. Our conviction of its truth is unshakable, for it rests upon the overwhelming evidence, not only of direct individual experience, but also on the experience of an innumerable company of all kinds of people in all kinds of places, and through all ages.

The Resurrection of the Body of Christ is essentially for the Christian the resurrection not of a mere attenuated ghost, but of a full and rich human personality in possession of greater powers and human desires transmuted and glorified.

HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN AND SITTETH, ETC.

Martin Luther is only following the traditions of the Catholic schoolmen where he says: "The right hand of God is not in any particular place circumscribed with bounds, as though there existed a golden seat or throne in some distinct apartment. Hence the right hand of God, the arm of God, the face, the essence, the spirit, the word of God, are all one and the same thing, namely, God Himself, who exists everywhere and supports everything by His divine energy." Christ's ascension is not a levitation to some circumscribed locality, but an exaltation into that everywhere present realm of God's power, from which He pours out His rejuvenating spirit on the world. He ascended into Heaven, "that He might fill all things with His presence."

FROM THENCE HE SHALL COME TO JUDGE, ETC.

Various interpretations are given by Catholics. Certain theologians have written of the Judgment as

if Christ were a magnified magistrate ; but it is at least as orthodox to believe in the Judgment of God as the discernment of the good physician whose kindness does not shrink from terrible remedies—the judgment of a God who saves, yet so as by fire.

I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY GHOST

In that holy spirit of humanity which is equally the Spirit of God and the spirit of man, His child, out-flowing from God through the most human of men, and above all through the Son of Man—the good spirit in all religions, the spirit of good impulse, of naturalness and gracefulness and heroism, “from whom all good things do come, the common bond between heaven and earth.”

THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH

The visible fellowship of christened men throughout the world, who theoretically and in God’s intention, and to some extent in actual practice, are the witnesses and mouthpiece and organs and instrument through which the divine kingdom of mankind is effectualised on earth.

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

Spiritualism is an attempt to do what the Catholic Church more fully does to bridge over the gulf of death. We believe in the communion between the living and the dead ; in the power of the living to help the departed, by prayer and intense desire, on their way through purgatory or the fires of experience towards their home in God ; and in the power of departed heroes, whose

heaven lies in extended ability, to help those who remain within the limitations of this world. We worship Christ, not as mere man deified but as real or divine man, as natural Son of God, and because utterly human, absolutely divine. We see in the exultation of the saints the wholesome development of this doctrine, and its extension to other human beings beside the Saviour. Christ is the Head, and the saints are the powerful limbs of God's Body, the Church. The Church teaches that "whereas in this life each believer has only an individual share in the gifts of the Spirit, in eternity they will be the common property of all, since each saint will then find in others what he lacks in himself."¹ The doctrine of the Communion of Saints has always been associated in the Church with holy communism.

THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS

That God is not inexorably against man in spite of all appearances ; that when the prodigal is yet a long way off the Father sees him ; that pleasure and pain, in some way at present inexplicable, are both the expressions of Almighty Love ; that God is always "in absolution," and that He pardons and understands to the uttermost, and that His mercy and His justice are two words for one thing. Further, that men made in the image of God are to live in forgiveness and charity one with another, and that the assurance of God's forgiveness and the forgiveness of society have been entrusted to the Church Militant here on earth. We believe, further, that forgiveness is a sovereign power for the healing of the souls of men.

¹ Swete's *Apostles' Creed*, pp. 85 and 86.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

Although a false asceticism passed as an evil wave over the Church, it was never recognised officially, and even ascetic monasticism had a hard fight for its life and sometimes got beaten, as in the case of Port Royal. This glorification of flesh got into the creed in protest against the dreary Orientalism of the second, third, and fourth centuries. In this clause we assert our belief in the resurrection, not of some feeble wraith divorced from appetites, but in all that essentially goes to the making of man, in man himself, with his full powers, bodily, mental, and spiritual, transmuted, transformed, and deified in some sense at present but dimly understood.

AND THE LIFE EVERLASTING

The translation *everlasting* is unfortunate; it should be eternal, a term not referring to time at all, *i.e.* not insisting upon the duration and quantity of existence, but on its quality. The "life overmastering," or "overwhelming life," would be the exact equivalent. It is worth noticing in passing that the judicial committee of the Privy Council of 1864—which numbered among its judges the Archbishops of Canterbury and York and the Bishop of London—decrees as follows: "The hope that the punishment of the wicked may not endure to all eternity is certainly not at variance with anything that is found in the Apostles' Creed."

It is significant that we profess our belief in God, not in Satan, in everlasting life, not in everlasting death. In the original draft of the Articles of Religion

a paragraph was inserted which implied endless punishment, but was deliberately rejected by the Church of England.

Death is disunion, isolation, discord. To be dead is to seek one's own apparent wealth, gratifying every ephemeral desire regardless of common wealth. It is to be self-centred, cut off from the common life, not allowing it to flow into us, the juices of life dried up to be "hermetically sealed in the barrel of self."¹ It is to make the ephemeral self our starting-point, our centre, our goal, and yet to feel as all votaries of death must feel the worm that dieth not and the fire that is not quenched.

Man's destiny is oneness with God and all sentient beings, and through this oneness the attainment of individuality. This is eternal or overmastering life. Individualist immortality, the infinite continuance of indolent, selfish existence, is many a conventional Christian's idea of Heaven; it is also God's idea of Hell. Heaven is not a loss of manhood, sleep and forgetfulness, the merging of the unconscious drop into the passive ocean. Heaven is the gaining of overwhelming personality in the magnificent life of the whole.

"O heart of man, O poor heart, O heart acquainted with misery and wretchedness, or rather overwhelmed with miseries: how glad wouldst thou be if thou hadst abundance of all these things? Ask thy furthest flight of thine inner fancy if it were able to receive thy joy of this so great happiness! Certainly if any other man whom thou lovedst as thyself were to

¹ Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*.

have the same happy state, the joy would be double, because thou wouldst be as glad for him as for thyself. But if two or three or a number more should have the same thing, thou wouldst be as glad for every one of them as for thyself, if thou didst love them as thyself. What joy, then, shall there be in that perfect love of the innumerable blessed angels and men, when none shall love any other less than himself, for every one of them shall be as glad for others as for himself?

“Now, if the heart of man be scarce able to conceive the joy of any one so great a benefit, how shall it be capable of so many and great joys? And doubtless, seeing that according as every man loveth another, so much doth he rejoice of his well-doing, therefore, just as in that blessed happiness every man shall without comparison love God more than himself and all others set together, so also shall he rejoice immeasurably more for the felicity of God than for the felicity of himself, and all other folks with him. Moreover, if they love God with all their heart, with all their mind, and with all their soul, and yet all their heart, all their mind, and all their soul suffice not to love Him as He is worthy, beyond all doubt they shall also rejoice with all their heart, with all their mind, and with all their soul, and yet their whole heart, their whole mind, and their whole soul, shall not suffice to rejoice to the full.”¹

¹ The little book of *The Contemplation of Christ*, 1577, republished as a Mirfield manual. This was one of the most popular devotional books of the time.

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